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14. ABSTRACT Globalization has necessitated an increasing reliance on the U.S. ability to influence international affairs to preserve and advance national interest and better contribute to national security. As societies have become more integrated, diplomatic, economic and informational ties between nations have strengthened and expanded, increasing interdependence among nations. This change has been largely positive, but it has introduced new challenges into interrelationships. Interdependence has made it more difficult to conduct unilateral action to resolve a dispute between two parties and to some extent has necessitated multilateral, collective solutions to problems. This collectivism, in turn, requires that activist nations must maintain the ability to influence the decisions of international partner nations. This paper analyzes the role strategic communication (SC) played from 1998-2006 in America's ongoing military intervention in Iraq. It presents an overview of strategic communication, reviewing fundamental components, major U.S. stakeholders, and their roles. Next, it presents senior policy-makers' communications, supporting military operations and reconstruction policies and assess their impact on the strategic, operational, and tactical environment. Finally, it will offer conclusions about the correlation between SC and the strategic outcome for the U.S. intervention in Iraq as it					
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**The Impact of Strategic Communication on
Victory and Defeat
In Iraq:
1998- 2006**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

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Abstract

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This paper analyzes the role strategic communication played from 1998-2006 in America's ongoing military intervention in Iraq. It will first present an overview of strategic communication, reviewing fundamental components, major U.S. stakeholders, and their roles. Next, it will present senior policy-makers' communications, supporting military operations and reconstruction policies and assess their impact on the strategic, operational, and tactical environment. Finally, it will offer conclusions about the correlation between strategic communication and the strategic outcome for the United States intervention in Iraq as it relates to America's ability to retain influence over other nations.

Note

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“Politics is not the art of the possible, rather it consists of choosing between what is disastrous and what is merely unpalatable.”¹

William Perry

I. Introduction

Over the course of 18 years, the United States has relied upon a military presence in the Persian Gulf to augment diplomatic efforts meant to influence Iraq, and advance American interests. This presence has taken three distinct forms to perform varied missions that have changed over time. First, massive numbers of American soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines were deployed under the auspices of a United Nations Security Council resolution (UN SCR) in a grand coalition that expelled Saddam Hussein’s troops from neighboring Kuwait in 1991. Next, their mission accomplished, and mandate fulfilled, most forces redeployed from the area, leaving behind a fraction of their combat power to enforce sanctions aimed at preventing Hussein from future aggressive military actions against his neighbors with conventional forces or weapons of mass destruction (WMD). For more than 11 years spanning 1991 to 2003, predominantly U.S. military units were deployed in a defensive posture in Turkey, the Persian Gulf and the surrounding Arabian states (excluding Iran) with the backing of the United Nations. Finally, a third and more comprehensive military operation began on March 19, 2003 in an effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power and end his support for terrorism, to seize and destroy weapons of mass destruction technologies and future capability, and to establish a new Iraqi government fitting a more western, democratic ideal.

While all three military interventions in Iraq have relied heavily on the coalition military forces and international resolve against a relatively static enemy of known

¹William Perry, (June 16, 1994) Quoted in Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11*. Secondary source was quoted as Perry, William.

capabilities, the latest intervention, beginning in 2003 has proven the most difficult to prosecute. The visible results of these difficulties are reflected in the duration and cost of the conflict, and the lack of U.S. domestic and international support for the American-led intervention. While the short-term tactical and operational military successes were immediately recognized, and even though the long term stability in Iraq appears to be achievable given the current situation, the ultimate success or failure of America's third foray into Iraq is not yet secure. There is little doubt that the Arabian Peninsula is a more stable region with a democratic, post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, but the question is, is the world a better place for the U.S., and is the U.S. in a better strategic position given its role in resolving this perceived crisis?

Well defined national interests are the bedrock for U.S. grand strategy. Specifically, strategy must be clear, correct, well communicated, grounded in common values, morality and logic, and achievable through the application of elements of national power. Strategy, communication, and actions when coordinated and synchronized across the spectrum of influence, lead to more predictable outcomes, and a higher likelihood of U.S. success when viewed domestically and on the world stage. Although weakness in any of these areas jeopardizes American success and her leadership position in the world, the proper application of the other components may overcome the deficiency, and promote U.S. short and long term successes overall.

The purpose of pre-conflict strategic communication (SC) regarding Iraq should have been to shape the environment while building enduring relationships to enhance U.S. success in the Persian Gulf region and continued access and influence world-wide. After combat operations began, strategic communication should have complimented the

accomplishment of U.S. political and military goals to a greater degree. Politically, the focus should have been on replacing the government in Iraq, building a beacon of democracy and stability in the Middle East, and reducing the potential for terrorist safe haven and a WMD-terrorism (WMD-T) nexus. Militarily, actions should have demonstrated distinct and internationally palatable messages: that our enemy was exclusively Hussein and his supporters, that our focused aims were to maintaining security and regional stability while training Iraqis for their new roles, and that principles of freedom and human rights are not exclusively American values.

The thesis of this paper is that poorly conducted strategic communication supporting Iraq operations from 2003 to present has led to a national and global skepticism towards U.S. ambitions, diminished her ability to act, and reduced her role as a world leader, ultimately producing the likelihood of strategic defeat. Despite recent progress and growing optimism in Iraq, increasing U.S. domestic support, and a sense that a successful end to American military involvement is within sight, strategic victory in Iraq requires more than achieving the stated military ends.

This paper will first present an overview of strategic communication, reviewing fundamental components, major U.S. stakeholders, and their roles. Next, it will present pre-conflict senior policy-makers' communications and their effectiveness in shaping the strategic environment. Then it will present critical military operations, and continued senior policy makers' communications, analyzing words and combat deeds, and present their impact on the strategic, operational, and tactical environment. Finally, it will offer conclusions about the correlation between strategic communications and long-term outcomes for the United States related to intervention in Iraq.

“... I say to you: that we are in a battle and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma.”¹

Ayman al-Zawahiri

II. Strategic Communication Defined

Although the U.S. has long been concerned with the attitudes of its citizens and the international community, foreign and domestic perception of America has recently become a national security concern.² Globalization has fostered a more communal era of interdependence, where hostility towards domestic or foreign policy makes its achievement more difficult, and simultaneously diminishes its effectiveness. The choreographed employment of information, and deliberate policy actions can be used to better align the perceptions of our adversaries with the ultimate policy goals of the United States. This choreography is known as strategic communication.

Well reasoned opposition to any policy is expected, under the guise of the two (or more) sidedness of most complex issues, but SC can be used to reduce bias against our choices, before the debate has started. Lindsey Borg asserted that success in future conflict “demands engaged leaders who clearly articulate the country’s vision and goals. Failure to engage is to allow others to frame the issue solely from their point of view.”³ Given its growing importance, this section will review White House, Department of State (DOS) and Department of Defense (DOD) roles and responsibilities, and detail the four major components of effective SC.

¹ Ayman Al-Zawahiri. Letter to Al Zarqawi, (July 9, 2005), quoted in Commander’s Handbook for Strategic Communication, (Suffolk, VA: United States Joint Forces Command, 2008), I-1.

² Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Muslim and Arab World, *Changing Minds Winning Peace; A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World*, (Washington DC: Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, 2003), 19.

³ Lindsey J. Borg, *Communicating with Intent: The Department of Defense and Strategic Communication* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 10.

White House Efforts

The President of the United States has enjoyed unprecedented power to influence American and international opinions as de facto leader of the largest economy and most powerful military in the world. Since the era of Theodore Roosevelt, the American executive has proclaimed values, policy and direction from a bully pulpit, and influenced the course of domestic and global events. As America grew in strength, the bully pulpit grew in its command of global attention. Technological media advances have further expanded and diversified audiences, and the pulpit now reaches all corners of the globe. This has allowed governments and private citizens to see the face, and hear the voice of America in real time. These same technological advances have given others nations and international organizations who command far less economic, or military might, the ability to speak to a global audience about relevant, niche issues. Consequently, the growing cacophony has forced the U.S. to consider a more coordinated effort to communicate values and resulting policy. This effort has been codified in the U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, and assigned to the Under Secretary of state for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

U.S. Department of State Efforts

While the President commands the ‘bully pulpit’, the DOS relies on public diplomacy⁴ to increase international understanding of American values and policies from embassies and missions across the globe. Without the benefit of the President’s assured audience, America’s stature abroad is secured by face-to-face interaction and enduring presence found in varied government programs. The diversity of these initiatives

⁴ *Changing Minds Winning Peace; A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World*, 8.

exposed the need for effective coordination and communication supporting their common purpose.

U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication dictates three strategic objectives that can be enhanced through coordinated communications.⁵ The policy coordination committee directed the DOS efforts to achieve these objectives using three distinct programs.⁶ This paper will consider only two of these areas, briefly detailing the modernization of communications and focusing largely on “the diplomacy of deeds,” while disregarding the expansion of education and exchange programs.

Communication modernization strategies are directed at the enhanced use of mass media to expand positive American presence in foreign markets. Technological innovations may include creative use of communication dissemination or procedural innovations (including enhanced language training) to allow American’s to explain policies, values and beliefs in the audiences’ native tongue. Working in concert with modernized communications, “the diplomacy of deeds” would better demonstrate to foreign audiences America’s values and beliefs. The strategy correctly recognizes that when compared with action, talk is cheap. It also identifies that while actions may make positive local impacts, the value of deeds is dramatically enhanced if the results are widely conveyed. When words and deeds reinforce one another, the ability to influence the strategic environment allows for continued freedom of action.

⁵ *National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*, 3. First, “America must offer a positive vision of hope and opportunity that is rooted in our most basic values.” Second, “With our partners, we seek to isolate and marginalize violent extremists who threaten the freedom and peace sought by civilized people of every nation, culture and faith.” Finally, “America must work to nurture common interests and values between Americans and peoples of different countries, cultures and faiths across the world.”

⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

Department of Defense Efforts

In late 2005, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld established a new Deputy Assistant Secretary post for Joint Communications, charged to shape DOD communications through doctrine, training and reorganization. His actions were necessary to support DOS leadership for U.S. Government SC activities. The resulting working relationship improved coordination and integration of DOD words and deeds, and highlighted deficiencies in Defense programs. These deficiencies were quickly addressed through the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the QDR Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, and most recently in the Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communications.

Using the February 2006 QDR, Secretary Rumsfeld pushed to transform Cold War conventional forces into a tailored, responsive 21st century military. Consequently, the DOD announced four priorities to implement national defense strategies: shaping the choices of countries at strategic crossroads, defeating terrorist networks, preventing hostile states and non-state actors from acquiring or using WMD, and defending the homeland in depth.⁷ The first priority required a military with the capability to “influence” others, and the next two addressed non-traditional challenges to U.S. security grounded in prevention, not reaction. Although the baseline document identified SC as a critical function in maintaining unity of effort between services, governmental departments, non-governmental organizations and foreign governments towards these strategies, it did not effectively define SC for the armed forces.

⁷ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, (Washington DC, 2006) 3.

The supplemental Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap constrained SC to “focused United States Government processes and effort to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable to advance national interests and objective through the use of coordinated information, themes, plans, programs and actions synchronized with other elements of national power.”⁸ The ultimate goals of DOD SC program are to preserve and enhance both the credibility and influence of the Department in order to prevent future conflicts, and shorten ongoing operations by changing adversary perceptions of American policy and actions.

Strategic communication will help the DOD to obtain advantage beyond the direct physical results of military action and allow for continued freedom to accomplish desired future actions. During combat operations, achieving desired effects while eliminating unintended consequences requires professionalism and competence on the part of every member of the armed forces. Despite the formal role of targeted information operations (IO) in SC, combat operations become de-facto American “deeds” and provide the dominant method used by the military to exercise strategic communications.

Independent of its source among the executive department and subordinate U.S. Government (USG) agencies, SC must address four critical elements if it is to be successful: the audience; credibility; timeliness; and the message.

The Audience

National and international security issues no longer maintain the status they once had, as subjects reserved for elite policy makers in the cloistered halls of governments. A rapid and diverse information environment has empowered former near-silent minorities

⁸ Department of Defense, *2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communications Execution Roadmap*, (Washington DC, 2006) 3.

with a voice far bigger than they have ever entertained in the past. Similarly, they have allowed isolated populations, once reliant on their governments' allowances for news and information, a window to the world's communications. Even the simplest adversary can now obtain a secure, robust means to distribute his message to a global audience for the purpose of raising awareness, influencing policy, recruiting, fund raising or propaganda.⁹

When explaining policy or actions, it is critical to understand the desired impact of the message on the target audience, and then consider impacts on unintended or unforeseen audiences. Although this list is incomplete, potential audiences for U.S. strategic communication include: foreign governments (friendly, neutral and adversarial), foreign populations, non-governmental organizations (international and regional), the United States government, and finally, American citizens.

In order to fully understand the audience, a detailed knowledge of the factors that motivate their behavior is required. This understanding is the only concrete barrier between an expected or surprised reaction to policy or actions and will allow the U.S. to communicate for effect. Unlike President Bush's November 2006 remarks where he said, "You are either with us or against us in the fight against terror," the makeup of an audience is much more nuanced than either extreme allows for. In reality, cultural associations alone can break an audience into five fuzzy categories: hard supporters ('with us'), soft supporters, neutrals, the soft opposition, and the hard opposition ('against us'). Complications like locality, tribal, and religious circumstance further differentiate an audience and may make all of the difference in the acceptance of a message, and its resulting influence on future actions. The Commander's Handbook for Strategic

⁹ Stephanie Babst, *Reinventing NATO's Public Diplomacy* (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2008), 2.

Communications demonstrates that “the local population’s perception may be the difference between victory and defeat in the cognitive environment – and lead to victory or defeat in the physical realm.”¹⁰

Credibility

Credibility and accuracy are established through faithfulness and fact. Hedrick Smith wrote that “Credibility – trust—is the most important key to survival and influence. It lays at the heart of political authority, for without credibility a political leader or a high government official cannot make a persuasive case to others.”¹¹ When describing the power of the Presidency, Bryce Harlow, a former Eisenhower aide furthered that idea saying that “Integrity is power—I’d put integrity first.”¹² The requirement to preserve American power and ability to influence others is grounded squarely in U.S. credibility. It follows then that the preservation of America’s credibility requires that words describing policy must be truthful and physical actions must reinforce the words. In some instances, short-term actions, by necessity, may run counter to long-term aspirations.¹³ While impossible to guarantee that America consistently supports her words with actions, it is mandatory to explain the rationale behind policy or actions that run contrary to stated values.

Also critical to preserving credibility is effective management of audience expectations. Expectations management requires that you accurately communicate

¹⁰ *Commander’s Handbook for Strategic Communication*, xiv. Cognitive advantage may be better described as momentum. In an ideological war, it is the long-term breeding ground for your opponent and the short term holding-pattern for someone teetering on the edge of hard opposition.

¹¹ Smith, Hedrick. *The Power Game*. 46.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Changing Minds Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World*, 18. “We must also confront the contradiction that trouble believers in democracy and liberalization. They see official U.S. diplomacy as frequently buttressing governments hostile to freedom and prosperity.”

threats, costs, casualties, and results by providing the best, worst and most likely results to the audience. Wright gives a prime example from Operation Iraqi Freedom when suggesting that “Saddam had ruled for nearly 25 years...the Americans had toppled him in less than three weeks, and relatively few of their Soldiers had died in the task. How could these same Americans be so feeble in the aftermath?”¹⁴ Dominance on the battlefield clearly led to the expectation that recovering from conflict would prove equally easy. Where reality differed from this expectation, discontent fomented. Certainly, the reality Iraqis sought differed from the reality that the U.S. delivered.

“Perception management was a constant problem; Iraqis had enormously unrealistic expectations and perceptions about how quickly life would improve after Saddam was ousted. These expectations were inflated by Coalition pronouncements before the war that the average Iraqi could be much better off when Saddam and his regime were out of power. The concept of ‘better’ proved to be a terrible cultural misperception on our part because we, the liberators, equated better with not being ruled by a brutal dictator. In contrast, a better life for Iraqis implied consistent, reliable electricity, food, medical care, jobs, and safety from criminals and political thugs.”¹⁵

Although the U.S. message must be credible, it is equally imperative that it is delivered in a timely manner that allows for informed and independent judgment by its recipients.

Timeliness

Although the American maxim holds true in that, “you never get a second chance to make a first impression,” consistency and trust-building over weeks, months and years are the true weapons of war for United States influence building. Use of those weapons

¹⁴ Anthony Shadid, *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War* (2006): 140, quoted in Donald Wright and Timothy Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign*. (Ft Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 91.

¹⁵ Wright and Reese, 281; Ralph Baker, “The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander’s Perspective on Information Operations,” *Military Review*, May-Jun (2006): 19. Quoted in Wright and Reese, 281.

requires careful consideration of the impacts words and actions well beyond the current news cycle to achieve the greatest benefits in this generational, global, ideological struggle for security from terror. While influence building is an over-the horizon activity, influence easily can be lost in the here and now by misguided or misapplied strategic communication. During operations supporting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization mission in Kosovo, U.S. Army General Wesley Clark remarked that “The instantaneous flow of news and especially imagery could overwhelm the ability of governments to explain, investigate, coordinate and confirm.”¹⁶ Timely communication must follow operations to prevent the enemy exclusive shaping rights over the meaning, justification and truthful reporting of our actions in order to reinforce American values and goals. During operations with the 2d Infantry Division in Iraq, Lieutenant Col Wayne Swan made this observation about the importance to timely communications at the local level, “...people pretty much believe the first message they hear and they don’t look into any of the details...so we had to get the message out first.”¹⁷

The Message

President Clinton remarked to his National Security Staff in 1994 that when U.S. policies involve the use of armed force to achieve our objectives, “there still needs to be a combination of doing the right things and saying the right things in addressing the world’s problems.”¹⁸ The “right things” are found in the values supporting the desired strategic message. In the U.S., these values are grounded in foundational documents with seemingly universal democratic appeal – the Declaration of Independence and the

¹⁶ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War*. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), 8.

¹⁷ Wright and Reese, 285.

¹⁸ Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11*. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), 91.

Constitution. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are at the root of U.S. strategic communication and enable the legitimate, right and noble message to influence the audience.¹⁹ Consequently, SC must be carefully constructed so as not to undermine American values, and the substance must be weighed against negative perceptions associated with U.S. action.

The USG must employ clear and choreographed SC, synchronizing its various sources (the White House, DOS, DOD, and soldiers on the battlefield, to mention a few) in order to align the perceptions of our adversaries with our policy goals. Strategic communication stakeholders must tailor the tone of each message for a particular audience and they must deliver the message credibly and in a timely manner if the desired strategic results are to be achieved. The next chapter will highlight many of the deficiencies of USG strategic communications based on U.S. involvement in Iraq from 1998 to 2006 with respect to the important characteristics presented here. The results of this analysis are seminal to understanding the presented conclusions.

¹⁹ Babst, 2. “This, in turn, puts a premium on political persuasion and communication to the public that the policy in question is legitimate, right and noble.”

“The statesman who yields to war fever is no longer the master of policy, but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.”¹

Winston Churchill

III. Strategic Communication Supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom

The two major genres of strategic communication during Operation Iraqi Freedom were words and deeds. During this campaign, methods included prepared and impromptu oral and written communications from senior U.S. policy makers, and major military action at both the tactical and operational level. Each method spoke to divergent audiences in Iraq, the U.S., and the international community. Taken together, policy communications and military actions will provide the basis for comprehensive analysis and conclusions about U.S. strategic communication and its impact on the successful achievement of U.S. strategy in Iraq and the broader international arena. These communications will be examined chronologically in two time periods, separated by the beginning of military intervention on March 19, 2003. Pre-conflict analysis will reflect extensive policy announcements from senior Bush administration officials, and wartime analysis will address continued policy announcements and ongoing military actions. Presentation and analysis will support conclusions on the impact of U.S. strategic communication on operations in Iraq.

Pre-conflict Communications

Failed termination criteria from the Persian Gulf War provided the precursors necessary for the beginnings of Operation Iraqi Freedom nearly 12 years later. From its beginnings, the UN course of action with its successive resolutions was doomed. United Nations Security Council Resolution (UN SCR) 687 was passed nearly a month after the

¹ Winston Churchill, *My Early Life* (1996): 232, quoted in Andrew Bacevich, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*. (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008), 157.

expulsion of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and the informal termination of hostilities. During that month, most coalition forces had either begun departure preparations or already had redeployed from the theater. Although Saddam and his army were defeated, the military power needed to secure United Nations resolve was now absent the region. Saddam Hussein interpreted this absence as coalition weakness and began a decade of defiance to a series of subsequent UN resolutions. Ultimately, the failure of the Government of Iraq to comply with UN SCR 687 and successive resolutions thru 2002 brought major combat operations back to the Persian Gulf. Although Saddam Hussein would be common to both struggles, and much of the justification for Operation Iraqi Freedom looked like unfinished business from the Persian Gulf War, these struggles were as different as night and day. In the first war, the state on state nature of fighting was undeniable. Success in a second armed intervention against Iraq, although beginning with state on state conflict, would also need to be rooted in the idea that any conflict was part of a generational and global struggle over ideology and the tactic of terrorism.²

Despite this, official communications from the United States supporting what would become Operation Iraqi Freedom are indistinguishable from communications following Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and the enforcements of no-fly zones during Operations Northern and Southern Watch. For the purposes of this thesis, President William Clinton provides a starting point for American diplomacy leading up to the second invasion of Iraq. Midway through his final term in office, President Clinton remarked:

² *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, (Washington DC, Sept 2004), 2.

“If we fail to respond today, Saddam and all those who would follow in his footsteps will be emboldened tomorrow by the knowledge that they can act with impunity, even in the face of a clear message from the United Nations Security Council and clear evidence of a weapons of mass destruction program. But if we act as one, we can safeguard our interest and send a clear message to every would-be tyrant and terrorist that the international community does have the wisdom and the will and the way to protect peace and security in a new era.”³

Beyond the United Nations Security Council and its repeated resolutions, the United States Congress passed several laws with regards to Saddam Hussein’s dictatorial Iraqi regime. As early as Oct 1998, the Iraqi Liberation Act was explicit about American intentions towards the government of Iraq⁴ and reinforced President Clinton’s sentiments from February. This bi-partisan legislation crystallized U.S. policy to support efforts to remove Hussein from power, and to promote and support any emerging democratic replacement regime. Although the act explicitly forbade military use of force in effecting regime change, it provided funding and armament for opposition groups, radio and television broadcasting (influence operations), and substantial humanitarian assistance. Finally, the act called for Presidential “lobbying” efforts at the United Nations to establish an international tribunal to indict and eventually prosecute Hussein for crimes against humanity, genocide, and gross violations of international law. Although unwilling to expand ongoing military operations in the Persian Gulf, the U.S. was making it clear that Saddam Hussein was running out of time.

If the Iraqi Liberation Act was the ground on which a second military campaign against Saddam Hussein was to be built, a joint congressional resolution that passed near unanimously on 18 September 2001 in the wake of the terrorist aircraft hijackings in the

³ William Clinton, “Address to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Pentagon Staff,” February 17, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/allpolitics/1998/02/17/transcripts/clinton.iraq> (accessed on February 9, 2009)

⁴ *Iraq Liberation Act of 1998*, Public Law 105-338, 105th Cong., 2d sess. (October 31, 1998).

United States would be its prepared foundation.⁵ Two separate provisions highlighted the continued “extraordinary threat to the national security” of the country and authorized the President broad powers to apply force against persons, organizations, or nations supporting international terrorism. First, it authorized the use of “necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organization, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided,” or harbored participants in the September 11 attack. Secondly, it allowed for potential actions needed to prevent any further acts of international terrorism directed against the United States. Congress emotionally ceded this authority in much the same way that they passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution prior to the Vietnam War approximately 40 years earlier.

In retrospect, President Bush’s address to Congress just two days later on 20 September 2001 was, in one sense, the intellectual kick-off to support military operations that unseated the Government of Iraq 18 months later. The President clarified three things in his speech: Muslims were our friends, Muslim terrorists blaspheming their faith were responsible for terrorist attacks against the U.S., and they, along with “every government that supports them” will be “regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”⁶ This line of thinking was critical to quash the perception of America’s crusader mentality, demonstrated through military interventions into Muslim nations during the previous decade. Addressing the first Gulf War (1991) Samuel Huntington suggested that despite the ultimate goal to restore Kuwaiti sovereignty, the conflict was a

⁵ *Authorization for Use of United States Armed Forces Against Those responsible for Recent Attacks Against the United States*. Public Law 107-40, 107th Cong., 1st sess. (September 18, 2001).

⁶ George W. Bush, “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People.” September 20, 2001, <http://whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

civilization war and another instance of Western imperialism.⁷ Safar Al-Hawali further personalized the idea by saying, “those Ba’athists of Iraq are our enemies for a few hours, but Rome is our enemy until doomsday.”⁸ Although just a starting point, the President’s words were needed to check an emotional response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and prevent a clash of civilizations should he choose to intervene in Iraq in the future.

The U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1373 eight days later, affirming its determination to prevent future similar attacks globally by charging member states to increase efforts at restricting financing for and movement of suspected organizations.⁹ The international mandate found in the Security Council Resolution affirmed President Bush’s call for action, but stopped short of categorizing supporting states as hostile regimes and instead insisted on a reaffirmation of previous declarations against terrorism.

With the beginning of the Global War on Terror in October, the Taliban government in Afghanistan dominated the President’s policy agenda. This changed with the 2002 State of the Union, with Bush supplying a name and slogan to our enemies in the war on terror, singling out North Korea, Iran, and Iraq “as an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world.”¹⁰ A few short words, the President’s ‘opening statement’ to court international and domestic support for military intervention, contained five of nine distinct reasons he would eventually use to justify war with Iraq. While

⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 247. “The Gulf War became a civilization war because the West intervened militarily in a Muslim conflict, Westerners overwhelmingly supported that intervention, and Muslims throughout the world came to see that intervention as a war against them and rallied against what they saw as one more instance of Western imperialism.”

⁸ Safar al-Hawali, “Infidels, Without, and Within,” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 52.

⁹ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 1373 Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts* (New York, 2001).

¹⁰ George W Bush, “President Delivers State of the Union Address.” January 29, 2002, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

generally warning of Iraq's hostility towards America, specifically, Bush charged Iraq with: its support of terror, its propensity to develop and use biological agents; its propensity to develop and use nerve agents; ongoing efforts to develop nuclear weapons; and the games he played with United Nations inspectors charged with finding and destroying those technologies. Tying these together, he detailed the grave and growing danger associated with Iraq, and claimed that indifference on our part could produce additional catastrophic results.

On 5 April, 2002, Trevor McDonald interviewed the President immediately prior to a visit with Prime Minister Tony Blair. Bush's position that Saddam Hussein and his government would be removed from power had solidified in the past months. He argued that a nexus of WMD and terrorist support would not be allowed in a post 9/11 world. Although Bush did not commit to military operations at the time, and offered that he had not reviewed any military plans to accomplish the mission, his intentions were certainly clear. McDonald offered a taste of the skepticism that the President would face over his decision when he offered that "when Kuwait was invaded...the aggressors were undoubtedly the Iraqis."¹¹

On September 12, 2002, President Bush addressed the 57th United Nations General Assembly, and his remarks focused on the growing concern of an uncooperative Iraq who would provide terrorists with "a shortcut to their mad ambitions," by supplying them with technology to kill on a massive scale. He detailed a decade of demands answered with a decade of defiance, producing a pattern of broken promises and

¹¹ George W. Bush, "Interview of the President by Sir Trevor McDonald of Britain's ITV Television Network." April 4, 2002, http://www.usembassy.it/file2002_04/alia/02040709.htm (accessed January 14, 2009).

resolutions, and reminded delegates of Iraq's dishonesty about chemical and biological programs discovered through U.N. inspections. Most important were his remarks that "the first time we may be completely certain [Saddam] has nuclear weapons is when...he uses [them]." The President tempered the need for action, with the need to give Iraq a final chance. If taken, this chance "could open the prospect of a government...based on human rights, economic liberty and internationally supervised elections."¹² U.N. efforts to build this government should not welcome Hussein, he warned. These remarks added to the case for war that he had begun in the State of the Union, introducing two additional reasons to intervene to the five he had already explained. First, and most specifically, the President criticized Iraq's record on human rights, advancing the case for the 'freedom agenda' and a Middle East without Hussein. Second, the President's warnings about the unannounced use of nuclear weapons formed the beginning of a new idea in the policy arena – the nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Presidential 'lobbying' at the United Nations was critical, because the organization has never had an activist bent. The resolution authorizing military force in Haiti was the first time that the Security Council approved armed intervention "not to reverse one country's attack on another but to restore a democratically elected leader."¹³ This fact alone demonstrates the obstacles that U.S. policy makers would need to overcome to gain international sanction for military actions in Iraq. For all of Saddam Hussein's failings, the world had accepted his status as the legitimate leader of his country. Despite his treatment of the Iraqi people, the collective will to forcefully depose

¹² George W. Bush, "Bush's Address to the UN." September 12, 2002, http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/bush/address_un020912.html (accessed February 22, 2009).

¹³ Derek Chollet James Goldgeier, 95-96.

him for crimes against his own citizens and his potential to threaten the globe would have to be generated from a cold start leaving American war hawks with a dilemma.

Said best by General Norman Schwarzkopf prior to the first Gulf War, “one of the reasons we lost world support for our actions was that we had no internationally recognized legitimacy for our intervention [in Vietnam]...”¹⁴ To avoid this in the Persian Gulf, Schwarzkopf, the Secretary of Defense, and then President George H.W. Bush spent considerable resources securing diplomatic legitimacy, and multinational forces to restore sovereignty to Kuwait in 1991 despite the clarity and universality of their objectives. By 2002, President George W. Bush had an even greater obligation to seek international blessing for future intervention in the Iraq in the absence of an Iraqi attack on a U.S. national interest. If America was going to act preemptively against Iraq, would it need a revised resolution, or, did UN SCR 687 provide the necessary legitimacy? Or, were its own national security obligations to defend against a perceived WMD-terrorism nexus empowered by Saddam Hussein sufficient? In either case, diplomatic support was needed to lend credence to American intentions.

In an effort to collect additional international support for actions against Saddam Hussein’s regime, the President met with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. During a weekly radio address from 14 September 2002, he detailed a growing coalition of concerned world leaders readying to act against “a grave and gathering danger.”¹⁵ President Bush expanded on previous communications, specifying that the scientific

¹⁴ Norman Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn’t Take a Hero*. (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 579. Exceeding international mandates would have endangered legitimacy, fractured the coalition and become a west vs. Middle-East conflict.

¹⁵ George W. Bush, “President Discusses Growing Danger posed by Saddam Hussein’s Regime.” September 14, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020914.html> (accessed October 7, 2008).

infrastructure and knowledge in Iraq gave Saddam Hussein the ability to build a nuclear weapon one year after acquiring fissile material – and explained that he had already sought the illicit purchase of uranium enrichment equipment. He added two new lines of thinking to his previous speeches. First, after highlighting the repeated violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions stemming from the war with Kuwait, he questioned the purpose and relevance of a United Nations that was unwilling to enforce its own rhetoric. Second, he equated Saddam Hussein with a world of fear, and implied that his removal would equate to progress for human dignity. Clearly, both lines advanced the case for preemptive intervention, sooner, rather than later.

Two weeks later, after meeting with members of the Congress, the President asked for new legislation demonstrating that the U.S. would not allow Iraq to ignore U.N. resolutions. In addition, he elaborated on claims that Saddam Hussein maintained ties to terrorism by explaining al Qaeda terrorists were in Iraq, providing the eighth of nine justifications for war. Consequently, he claimed that the danger to America was growing, and when fully materialized, “...it may be too late to protect ourselves and our allies.”¹⁶

On 5 October 2002, the President re-emphasized the growing need for a congressional joint resolution authorizing military intervention. By now, he suggested that war was perhaps Hussein’s only option, and that the coalition quarrel was with him and his government, not Iraq’s citizens. President Bush coined a new term with a familiar acronym – WMD – as “weapons of mass death” to further vilify Hussein for his other inhumane reactions against his own citizens, and his neighbors. In addition, he advanced a new idea that Iraq “has a horrible history of striking without warning,”

¹⁶ George W. Bush, “Radio Address by the President to the Nation.” September 28, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html> (accessed October 7, 2008).

painting the picture that “delay, indecision, and inaction”¹⁷ were not realistic choices for America because of the potential horror associated with them.

In the month following these last remarks, the President secured three major political victories. First, the U.S. Congress passed the *Iraq War Act*. Second, 8 November 2002, the United Nations Security Council adopted a new resolution covering the situation in Iraq and Kuwait. Finally congressional mid-term elections added to the Republican majority in the House¹⁸ and secured a majority in the Senate.¹⁹ Collectively, these actions solidified support for the President and his increasingly bellicose agenda towards Iraq.

More significant than its 1998 legislation, in October 2002, the U.S. Congress enacted the *Authorization for use of Military Force Against Iraq*. Although Republicans controlled both the legislature and executive, memories of “9/11” dominated, and bipartisan support for this bill was strong, despite the immediacy of November’s mid-term elections. This bill tied Iraq to the sponsorship of terrorism, and the events of 11 September 2001. Furthermore, it authorized the use of American armed forces to defend U.S. interests and enforce relevant U.N. sanctions if peaceful means proved unsuccessful.²⁰ This resolution limited the use of force to situations that were consistent with the aims of the war against international terrorists, their organization, or nations that

¹⁷ George W. Bush, “President: Iraqi Regime Danger to America is ‘Grave and Growing.’” October 5, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021005.html> (accessed October 7, 2008).

¹⁸ U.S. Congress. House, “Party Divisions of the House of Representatives (1789 to Present),” http://clerk.house.gov/art_history/house_history/partyDiv.html (accessed October 7, 2008). Republicans gained eight net seats in the mid-term election.

¹⁹ U.S. Congress. Senate, “Party Division in the Senate, 1789-Present,” http://senate.gov/pagelayout/history/one_item_and_teasers/partydiv.htm (accessed October 7, 2008). Republicans gained one seat in the election producing a 50-48-2 split, leaving the Senate leadership to Vice Presidential vote.

²⁰ *Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002*, Public Law 107-243, 107th Cong., 2d sess. (October 16, 2002). Section 3 (b) (1)

supported them.²¹ Simply, Congress' only demand was that Iraq was shown as a terrorist state prior to commencing military action aimed at deposing its government.

Following U.S. legislation and in response to a growing demand for action from America, the U.N. Security Council adopted resolution 1441 and established new timelines for Saddam Hussein to comply with all previous resolutions on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.²² Similar to previous resolutions, it relied on the teeth demonstrated in UN SCR 660, the authorization of the use of force to restore Kuwaiti sovereignty.²³ Unfortunately, these teeth had dulled considerably from 1991 to 2002. Timeline requirements for compliance with terms for the cessation of conflict in UN SCR 687 had been repeatedly broken over the past decade without a coalition response.²⁴

As a consequence of these recent political victories, President Bush delivered an ultimatum to Hussein on 9 November 2002, committing to the enforcement of world judgment. Additionally, he prepared for a 13 November discussion with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan at the White House. Annan praised the President's support of a multilateral, unanimous U.N. resolution, and touted collectivism as the means to defeat terrorists, by terminating financial and logistical support, and removing safe havens.²⁵

Hussein's Iraqi government formally accepted UN SCR 1441, and consequently invited UN assessment teams back to Iraq. The President's response was that "Iraq is

²¹ Ibid., Section 3 (b) (2)

²² U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 1441 The situation between Iraq and Kuwait* (New York, 2002).

²³ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 660 Iraq-Kuwait* (New York, 1991).

²⁴ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 687 Iraq-Kuwait* (New York: 1991) 8 (a)-(b), 9 (a), 12. These sections impose specific requirements on the Hussein government regarding the supervised destruction of chemical and biological weapons, medium range ballistic delivery systems, the declaration of all such capabilities (15 day timeline) and on-site inspections, and unconditional guarantees to forgo acquisition or development of nuclear weapons or nuclear weapon usable materials.

²⁵ George W. Bush and Kofi Annan, "Joint remarks from Bush, George W. and Annan, Kofi." November 13, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/11/pring/20021113-10.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

now required by the United Nations to provide a full and accurate declaration of its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs.”²⁶ This response sent mixed signals to Hussein because the newer, more-final threat did not differ from previously dismissed UN or U.S. requirements. This further undermined international resolve and credibility and afforded Hussein the perception of more time.

As the deadline for Iraqi compliance with provisions of UN SCR 1441 drew near, President Bush again addressed the nation. He reaffirmed that “disarming [Iraq] is a central commitment of the war on terror,” and that the only judgment left for America to make prior to military intervention centered on changes in Hussein’s behavior and a willingness to cooperate completely with international demands. Finally, he cautioned, “the temporary peace of denial...would only be a prelude to a broader war and greater horror.” His warning against Iraqi failures to meet U.N. demands regarding weapons of mass destruction led him to say, “America will confront gathering dangers early on.”²⁷ These seven short words established the basis for preemption and the Bush Doctrine.

Although the idea of preventative intervention had been gathering steam, the President’s resolve to confront Hussein before he surprised the U.S. became more important with approaching U.N. deadlines. Thus far, prudence and international precedence regarding preparations for danger extended to defensive actions, and precluded first-strike actions to prevent an attack. For 40 years, Americans held that the Cold War strategy of massive retaliation proved the best defense against potential Soviet posturing, demonizing Russian nuclear preemption as impractical, immoral and nakedly

²⁶ George W. Bush “Radio Address by the President to the Nation.” December 7, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021207.html> (accessed October 7, 2008).

²⁷ Ibid.

aggressive. The country's former willingness to accept a retaliatory role following a catastrophic attack jeopardizing national survival contrasted with the Presidential stance that now, Americans must become global aggressors to ensure their safety.

Unfortunately, failures in this policy were immediately evident. Bush was wrong to assign inevitability to the future, and then use that inevitability to justify offensive operations. Bacevich correctly wrote that, "...nothing in history is inevitable, including the probable."²⁸ As a consequence claiming imminent danger as justification for opening military operations against Iraq would consume a growing percentage of the Presidents policy discussions.

Although Hussein met intermediate timelines following the President's remarks, on 28 December 2002 Bush reminded him that the burden of proof for disclosure, disarmament or destruction was his alone. He reiterated previous threats that anything short of voluntary disarmament along U.N. timelines would require military disarmament at the hands of a U.S. lead coalition. Three days later, he tempered his New Years hopes of a peaceful resolution with caution, estimating that "Saddam Hussein hasn't heard the message."²⁹ He redirected reporters questions about potentially crippling economic costs associated with an offensive campaign by highlighting the economic impacts seen in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Describing America's ability to afford a war, the President made a case for pre-emption based on the impact of Iraqi WMD-enabled terrorism, saying "this economy cannot afford to stand an attack."³⁰

²⁸ Bacevich, 164.

²⁹ George W. Bush "President Discusses Iraq and North Korea with Reporters." December 31, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/print/20021231-1.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

³⁰ Ibid.

One week later, the President acknowledged reports that Saddam Hussein said he was cooperating with U.N. inspectors but declared Iraqi reports on chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons efforts deficient. He couched his doubt of Hussein's intentions and compliance efforts with a hopeful message saying that "he's got time" and reiterated a global expectation of disarmament. The President claimed that looming U.N. inspection reports would prove to be a critical juncture in the U.S.'s future direction towards Iraq.³¹

Following a 12,200 page declaration to the United Nations in support of UN SCR 1441 requirements, National Security Adviser, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, articulated that Iraqi commitments to maintain and conceal remaining weapons resulted in false and incomplete reporting. Beyond the sentiment that inspectors were being buried in paperwork Dr. Rice focused on five instances where willful falsehoods proved inconsistent with commitments for cooperative and transparent disarmament. First, Iraq did not account for its efforts to obtain uranium from abroad, in support of its nuclear ambitions. Second, Iraq did not account for long range ballistic missile program fuels research. Third, Iraq did not provide information about the destruction or status of more than 4,000 pounds of precursor material for anthrax and biological weapons production discovered in earlier U.N. inspections. Fourth, Iraq did not include details about weapons inspector "discovery" of a dozen chemical weapons warheads. Finally, Iraq had not explained efforts to hide movement and storage of nuclear materials and research to prevent discovery by U.N. inspectors. Taken in whole, Dr. Rice claimed that through

³¹ George W. Bush "Remarks During Cabinet Meeting." January 6, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030106-6-1.html> (accessed October 7, 2008).

“both its actions and its inactions, Iraq is proving not that it is a nation bent on disarmament, but that it is a nation with something to hide.”³²

The President’s 28 Jan 2003 State of the Union provided an opportunity to address a massive national audience to explain that the only available justification for Saddam Hussein’s recent actions and faulty declarations was so he could have weapons to “dominate, intimidate or attack.” Most important in the speech were the beginnings of an organized campaign to justify preventative military actions against the Iraqi regime.

“Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and is not an option.”³³

The President furthered the case for preemption through claims that their enemy was not surrounding, but rather ruling the country, and that removal of the Hussein government would amount to liberation, not defeat. To oppressed Iraqis, these words suggested either of two outcomes associated with intervention. The first meant that armed conflict would remove Hussein, and bring Iraq back to the table as a nation conforming to liberal Western practices and freedoms, benefitting Iraqi’s. Conversely, “freedom” could have been a simple veneer providing legitimacy to a self-serving U.S. aggression against Muslims, and Arabs, and for oil, wealth and control.

Finally, the President used the State of the Union to undercut the need for multilateralism in preemptive action. Although he urged U.N. Security Council actions, he put the world on notice by saying that the U.S. “will consult...but if Saddam Hussein

³² Condoleeza Rice “Why We Know Iraq is Lying.” *New York Times*. January 23, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/print/20030123-1.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

³³ George W. Bush “State of the Union Address.” January 28, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/print/20030128-19.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.”³⁴ Thru this statement, the President acknowledged that in a practical sense, participation in a partnership requires subordination of some autonomy, but in the case of Iraq, he would not negotiate on conditions of disarmament, or the methods for achieving them. Affectively, the President said that U.S. national strategy was not an international collective decision. He failed to heed the advice captured in a later quote by General Zinni, that America had an obligation to “work out how to implement a strategy in ways that are cooperative and non-confrontational in a multilateral international context.”³⁵

In conjunction with the State of the Union, Secretary of State Colin Powell’s argument to the U.N. Security Council on 6 February 2003 completed the foundation of U.S. policy for armed intervention in Iraq. The lengthy speech used nine distinct sections to specifically and thoroughly address grievances with the Ba’athist Hussein regime in Iraq. This speech, although laden with policy, differed from other official addresses in that the Secretary offered intelligence based examples in the form of intercepted audio, satellite imagery and personal interviews with Iraqi defectors to “prove” a case to the world. The major themes of the address were: ongoing deception and defiance of UN resolutions; the biological weapons program; the chemical weapons program; the nuclear program; long range rocketry development, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Tony Zinni, *The Battle for Peace: A Frontline Vision of America’s Power and Purpose*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 148.

development; continued support for terrorism; the potential for a nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction; and human rights violations.³⁶

Secretary Powell reported the belief of U.N. inspectors that “Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance...of the disarmament which was demanded of it,”³⁷ and was consequently in further material breach of the “final” resolution (UN SCR 1441) passed in September, 2002. He believed that his “conclusion is irrefutable and undeniable,” and led him to re-state Presidential policy that “...this body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will without responding effectively and immediately.”³⁸

As Secretary Powell continued his speech, he detailed a mobile Iraqi biological production capability able to make thousands of liters of anthrax, and other agents such as “gas gangrene, plague, typhus, tetanus, cholera, camel pox...and smallpox” and airborne and waterborne distribution methods. In a crescendo, he claimed that the biological weapons were only as chilling as a booming chemical weapons capability.

The Secretary suggested that poor accounting and reporting following the 1991 Gulf War would allow for more than 1,000 tons of mustard gas and over 4 tons of VX nerve agent in Iraq. On its own, the VX agent produced by Iraqis was so deadly that a single drop would kill a person in minutes. Secretary Powell reported that “UNSCOM gained forensic evidence that Iraq had produced VX and put it into weapons for

³⁶ Colin Powell, “U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell Addresses the U.N. Security Council,” February 5, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/print/20030205-1.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

³⁷ U.N. News Centre, “Iraq cooperating but needs to do more on 'substance,’” January 27, 2003, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=5983&Cr=iraq&Cr1=inspect&Kw1=Security+Council&Kw2=&Kw3=> (accessed January 17, 2008).

³⁸ Powell, “U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell Addresses the U.N. Security Council,” February 5, 2003.

delivery,”³⁹ but this claim was met with official Iraqi denials. Regardless of this, Powell claimed that “Saddam Hussein has chemical weapons. Saddam Hussein has used such weapons. And Saddam Hussein would have no compunction about using them again.”⁴⁰

Powell then went on to explain potential progress in Iraq’s nuclear program, suggesting that Hussein had “two out of the three key components needed to build a bomb.” Nuclear scientists and a bomb design had been long available to Saddam, and all that he needed was a suitable amount of fissile material to produce a nuclear explosion. As a consequence, Powell reported that Iraqi efforts were focused on uranium enrichment, and U.S. and foreign intelligence sources had provided evidence that Hussein was working towards enrichment capability. Although Powell allowed for and acknowledged skepticism about Iraq’s nuclear program and potential, he expressed certainty that despite mandates to “halt all nuclear activities of any kind” that Hussein was still working towards the goal of a nuclear Iraq.

“People will continue to debate this issue, but there is no doubt in my mind, these elicited procurement efforts show that Saddam Hussein is very much focused on putting in place the key missing piece from his nuclear weapons program.”⁴¹

Secretary Powell discussed two weapons technologies that Iraq was working on – long range rockets and UAVs – as a means to deliver the biological, and chemical weapons it possessed, and the nuclear weapons that it sought. His focus was on Iraq’s non-compliance with UN SCR 687 mandates against both programs, and he was dismissive of Iraqi claims that the missiles were for self defense. Iraq had claimed that its UAVs were for short-range only, but flight testing had demonstrated unrefueled flights

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

exceeding 500 kilometers. He said that “the linkages...between Iraq’s UAV program and biological and chemical warfare agents are of deep concern to us,”⁴² and suggested that ready transport could make them a direct threat to the U.S.

Next, the Secretary of State transitioned to Iraqi decade long sponsorship of terrorism, and his concerns for “the way that [Iraq’s] illicit weapons can be connected to terrorists and terrorist organizations”⁴³ who are willing to use them. He tied Saddam Hussein and his government to al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden thru a Jordanian ex-patriot living in Baghdad -- Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. In addition, he demonstrated the association between bin Laden and Saddam Hussein thru a series of Iraqi intelligence meetings and support thru 2001. Powerfully, Powell dismissed critics of the idea of Iraqi sponsorship of terrorism. He said that “ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and al Qaeda together.” In closing, he suggested that “the nexus of poisons and terror is new. The nexus of Iraq and terror is old. The combination is lethal.” In linking al Qaeda to Saddam Hussein, Secretary Powell had attempted to satisfy a Congressional prohibition on the use of “necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organization, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided,” or harbored participants in the September 11 attack.⁴⁴ In addition, he met preconditions from the *Iraq War Act* from 16 October 2002 by detailing that military actions against Iraq would consistent with the aims of the war against international terrorists, their organization, or nations that supported them.⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ *Authorization for Use of United States Armed Forces Against Those Responsible for Recent Attacks Against the United States.*

⁴⁵ *Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002*, Section 3 (b) (2)

Secretary Powell demonstrated Saddam Hussein's ruthless campaigns against his own people, and military adversaries and his utter contempt for human life by detailing historical accounts of biological and chemical weapons, and past accounts of ethnic cleansing. He tied human rights abuses and "his calculated cruelty to his own citizens and to his neighbors" to the threat that he poses to all of humanity, and called for something to stop him. In closing, Secretary Powell stated:

"When we confront a regime that harbors ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction and provides haven and active support for terrorist, we are not confronting the past, we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future."⁴⁶

He posited that we could not risk that Hussein would someday use his weapons of mass destruction at a place and time of his choosing. He then warned that the U.S. "will not and cannot run that risk" and that Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons "for a few more months or years is not an option, not in a post-September 11th world."

Secretary Powell's performance was similar to Adlai Stevenson's address to the United Nations on the eve of the Cuban missile crisis. His argument was fascinating, compelling, and unlike any other public diplomacy offered since the 1960's integrating imagery, intelligence, national security, and American values. Like Stevenson before him, he offered an evil foe, equipped with weapons of mass destruction, the possibility of unprovoked, surprise attack against the homeland and visible 'proof' packaged neatly for a global audience. New to public diplomacy supporting Iraq operations were graphics showing the intricacies of secret WMD production. Where Powell differed from Stevenson is as important as the similarities in their presentations. Stevenson's claims

⁴⁶ Powell, "U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell Addresses the U.N. Security Council," February 5, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/print/20030205-1.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

about a nuclear equipped Cuba were suddenly thrust onto the American people, but they had been living with awareness of a biological, chemical and potentially nuclear Iraq for more than ten years. Consequently, the emotions associated with the September 11, 2001 attacks, although still raw, were abating.

Immediately following Secretary of State Powell's speech to the U.N., President Bush provided a supporting press release. He expounded on Powell's remarks, providing an example of a tactical ship-borne Iraqi UAV strike against the United States. Key to his example was the reach that such an attack provided Saddam Hussein. The terror umbrella extended well beyond coastal cities and population centers and included the American heartland, hundreds of miles from a hypothetical and indefensible launch point. He claimed that "Iraq is harboring a terrorist network," and linked that same network to the recent murder of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) diplomat, Laurence Foley in Amman, Jordan, and plots in Europe, the Caucasus and Russia, with evidence of poison production and a thwarted attack in London. Finally, he linked these terrorist attacks and the danger posed in the future thru similar attacks directly to Saddam Hussein. President Bush concluded with a now familiar challenge to the Security Council by saying that "the dictator of Iraq is making his choice...now the Security Council will show whether its words have any meaning." He furthered that actions supporting its own words would renew the purpose of the United Nations and demonstrated that it could meet future challenges and dangers, but failure to act would confirm Saddam's suspicions that "resolutions mean little without resolve."⁴⁷

⁴⁷ George W. Bush, "World Can Rise to This Moment." February 6, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/print/20030206-17.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

One day later, the President refined this sentiment by saying that “if the Security Council were to allow a dictator to lie and deceive, [it] would be weakened.” In his impromptu answer to press questioning, he advanced two new ideas and reiterated a third. First, that no *additional* Security Council resolutions were needed to justify the use of U.S. or coalition military forces to disarm the Hussein government, yet they would be preferred. Second, he placed the blame for any conflict squarely on Saddam Hussein by saying that “he’s the person who gets to decide war and peace.” Finally, President Bush affirmed his decision to “lead a coalition to disarm” Saddam, if he didn’t do it himself, with or without the support of the Security Council.⁴⁸

Secretary Rumsfeld, in a 14 February 2003 speech aboard the USS Intrepid discussed “nation building” as an American means to a more stable global ends. His focus was on two overarching pledges in the event of intervention in Iraq – “to stay as long as necessary; and to leave as soon as possible.”⁴⁹ Hanging in the balance were commitments to ensure that no WMD remained in Iraq, Saddam Hussein would be removed from power, and a new Iraqi government would be established. America’s national security interests in Iraq, as reflected in Rumsfeld’s remarks had both a practical and psychological purpose. From a practical standpoint, they supported military resourcing, advanced preparation, and action in Iraq. From a psychological perspective they provide justification for removal and replacement of Saddam Hussein. The freedom agenda, said Bacevich, “provides a moral gloss that can be added to virtually any initiative by insisting that whatever concrete interests might be at stake, the United States

⁴⁸ George W. Bush, “This is a Defining Moment for the U.N. Security Council.” February 7, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/print/20030207-3.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

⁴⁹ Donald Rumsfeld, “Beyond Nation Building.” February 14, 2003, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=331> (accessed February 22, 2009).

is also acting to advance the cause of freedom and democracy.”⁵⁰ Although this ‘snowballing’ provides another means for populist support, it does not assure that that support extends beyond skin deep, or that the cause is greater than a peripheral interest for the nation.

The Defense Secretary warned that we should not underestimate challenges associate with intervention in Iraq. Unfortunately, he raised expectations for Americans and Iraqi’s alike by assuring us that gaffs made in the lead up to operations in Afghanistan -- a successful campaign at the time -- would not be repeated in Iraq. Time and infrastructure, Rumsfeld claimed, were the silver bullets that would allow for comprehensive planning and a rapid restoration of services to right Iraq as soon as hostilities ended.⁵¹

Surprisingly, and despite the expectations that Rumsfeld created, he had established the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) only a month before, in January 2003. Although he had selected a respected “insider” to lead the effort, retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner had scant time to prepare to restore basic services and re-establish governance in a post-Saddam Iraq. Although the destruction in Iraq was expected to be minor when compared to that in WWII Germany, security and reconstruction planning in that conflict began at the same time as invasion planning. Additionally, America’s last government changing military intervention (in Panama) nearly resulted in tactical and operational success associated with the seizure of Noriega and his security force undermined by strategic failure due to instability caused by the

⁵⁰ Bacevich, 160.

⁵¹ Donald Rumsfeld, “Beyond Nation Building.” February 14, 2003.

power vacuum. Advancing expectations in light of the post-conflict reality was a strategic blunder of immeasurable consequence.

In prepared remarks to the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) on 26 Feb 2003, the President advanced the argument for armed intervention in Iraq by equating the history of September 11, 2001 to the future for America if Saddam Hussein was not removed from power. He claimed that America would not allow secret and once distant threats enabling “the triumph of hatred and violence in the affairs of men.” This would require that Americans must confront the growing challenges of Iraq to ensure national security, and “the long-term safety and stability of our world.”⁵²

In a break from past arguments, he advanced the idea of a liberated Iraq as an example demonstrating the “power of freedom to transform...by bringing hope and progress” to millions. The President elevated the case for war with Iraq beyond American security, turning conflict into a vehicle to free the Iraqi people living “in scarcity and fear, under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war, and misery, and torture.” The President’s policy statement here advanced the freedom agenda, and supported Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz’s prior statements that the Iraq war may produce “the first Arab democracy”.⁵³ Most certainly, the United States’ first priority was the expulsion of Saddam Hussein, but the benefits of a stable, secular, Iraqi democracy were equally palatable and ultimately more desirable in the long run.

New to policy speeches, the President told the American Enterprise Institute that emergency medicines and food stores stood at the ready to help a newly liberated

⁵² George W. Bush, “President Discusses the Future of Iraq.” February 26, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030226-11.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

⁵³ Paul Wolfowitz, interview by Sam Tannenhaus, May 9, 2003, Vanity Fair, transcript <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2594> (accessed February 21, 2009).

citizen's transition from one government to another. Additionally he advanced four major priorities for a post-Saddam Iraq: finding and destroying weapons of mass destruction, security, resource protection and regime change. All of these priorities would require an "atmosphere of safety" so that "reform-minded local leaders could build lasting institutions." Finally, the President supported the idea that the U.S.'s continued military restraint towards Iraq "demonstrated our commitment to effective international institutions." He re-affirmed the United States position that "we believe in the Security Council – so much that we want its words to have meaning."⁵⁴

Just one week later, on the first of March, the President's weekly radio address built on his arguments to the AEI. Although most of his words were repeated from previous speeches, he advanced the morality of potential military actions against Iraq by suggesting that "the lives and freedom of the Iraqi people matter little to Saddam Hussein, but they matter greatly to us."⁵⁵ His focus was almost entirely on broadening the justification for armed intervention, and his remarks detailed the idea of rebuilding Iraq, as if Hussein's removal from power was fait accompli.

U.S. war plans for Operation Iraqi Freedom relied on a two-pronged attack dependent on access from Kuwait in the Persian Gulf, and thru Turkey in the north. Despite continuous high-level diplomacy, a change in government in Turkey occurred in November 2002. Growing Turkish popular opposition towards military intervention in Iraq ultimately denied the United States what had been a historically supportive

⁵⁴ Bush, George W. "President Discusses the Future of Iraq." February 26, 2003.

⁵⁵ George W. Bush, "President's Radio Address." March 1, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030301.html> (accessed November 24, 2004).

government.⁵⁶ This was a tremendous blow for two reasons. First, the Turks would have provided secular Muslim endorsement of U.S. actions, allaying remaining fears that this conflict was secretly anti-Islam. Secondly, U.S. miscalculations about Turkish basing and over-flight for invasion forces kept the 4th Infantry Division at sea and the 101st Airborne Division firmly on the ground. This delayed their eventual entry into the conflict, and prevented easy passage to the oil rich cities of Kirkuk and Mosul to protect the Kurds, Iraq's infrastructure, and force Hussein to defend his northern flank. Although the operational and tactical concerns seemed most important at the time, the absence of Muslim support for this intervention was indicative of Islamic sentiments toward the U.S.⁵⁷ and could not be dismissed, despite comments from U.S. Central Command.

The President capitalized on the 15-year anniversary of Saddam Hussein's attacks on Iraqi Kurd's at Halabja to refocus Americans on the continued danger of inaction towards Iraq. Although he continued to advance freedom and stability for Iraqi citizens, his arguments for military action at the expense of U.N. posterity were clear in his remarks that "we have seen far too many instances in the past decade...where the failure of the Security Council to act decisively has led to tragedy." While professing support

⁵⁶ Peter Woodmansee, Timothy Faulkner and Wayne C. Blanchette, "The Need to Validate Planning Assumptions," *Military Review* 85 (Jan/Feb 2005): 60. "96% of Turkish people did not support a U.S. led war with Iraq." Some of this dissatisfaction was due to post Gulf-War cross border actions taken by emboldened Iraqi Kurds and fear of repeat conditions after a second invasion. Still other Turks were disappointed after U.S. economic aid promises associated with the loss of Iraqi trade in post-war sanctions proved insufficient.

⁵⁷ Helene Cooper and Greg Jaffe, "U.S. Looks at Alternatives to Turkey," *Wall Street Journal (Europe)* (Brussels), March 3, 2003, <http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=298708991&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientid=3921&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed March 13, 2009). U.S. Army Lieutenant General William Wallace said, "Turkey doesn't change the playing field that much. Clearly, attacking from two directions is more disruptive to enemy operations than one."

for diplomatic efforts, President Bush claimed that “some threats are so grave, and their potential consequences so terrible, that they must be removed.”⁵⁸

The very next day, at the Atlantic Summit, tempered with the notion that “the responsibility is [Saddam Hussein’s],” and that conflict could still be avoided, Bush indicated that an international partnership would be needed to reaffirm Iraqi territorial integrity and ensure rapid humanitarian relief following presumed military operations. The President echoed his Defense Secretary’s 14 February remarks and offered one assurance to the international community and the people of Iraq, “any military presence, should it be necessary, will be temporary.”⁵⁹ This presence would be exclusively used to support the priorities he forwarded a month prior to the American Enterprises institute: elimination of WMD, security, delivery of humanitarian assistance and setting conditions to reconstruct Iraq under a new regime.

The President’s address at the Atlantic Summit would prove historic, not because of its content, but because of its context in history. With this speech, the Cold War strategy of deterrence, and the long drift since the fall of the communism, ended. In three days, the Bush Doctrine would take hold, ushering in a new era of preemption for the United States. Until now, policy statements and diplomacy had focused on unseating Saddam Hussein through U.S. efforts to: garner collective support to enforce broken UN Security Council Resolutions; to seize and destroy weapons of mass destruction; to break Iraqi support for terrorism; remove the chance for a terrorist-WMD nexus; to provide

⁵⁸ George W. Bush, “President Discusses Iraq in Radio Address.” March 15, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030315.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

⁵⁹ George W. Bush, “Statement of the Atlantic Summit: A Vision for the Iraqi People.” March 16, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030316-1.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

freedom for the Iraqi people; and build an Arab beacon for democracy. According to Rumsfeld, this policy talk would end abruptly with a fist-fight because:

“...you cannot defend against terrorism. You can’t defend at every place at every time against every technique. You just can’t do it, because they just keep changing techniques, time, and you have to go after them. And you have to take it to them, and that means you have to preempt them.”⁶⁰

Certainly, the debate on preemption was not complete. Like with any idea or task clouded by complex variables where the participants can never feel completely prepared, when the starting gun fires, the race begins. For the Bush Doctrine, the gun fired on 19 March 2003. The charge to preemptive war, begun in earnest in 2001, had culminated after 18 months of policy speeches centered on containment of WMD, termination of Iraqi terrorist support, elimination of the WMD-terrorism nexus, preservation of the United Nations, freedom for the people of Iraq, and the establishment of a Middle Eastern beacon of democracy.

Military Intervention in Iraq

In order to help achieve the U.S. strategic aims of WMD seizure and destruction in Iraq, the supporting military objective became the removal of Saddam Hussein and his Ba’athist regime from power. This began in earnest with raids and deep strike operations focused on the isolation and destruction of key leadership nodes, severing Hussein’s ability to control armed forces, and influence Iraq’s population.

Saddam Hussein’s Ba’athist regime controlled Iraq using long levers of power centered in and around Baghdad. While a traditional campaign to overthrow the nation and take the capital city would resemble a historical war for conquest, military “ways”

⁶⁰ Donald Rumsfeld, interview by author, (2002), quoted in Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 34.

were designed to support U.S. interests by liberating the people of Iraq. Planning for the fall of Baghdad was based on Army urban warfare doctrine dating from 1999 and centered on sparing the key infrastructure by focusing on specific targets and relying on precision weaponry to conduct traditionally manpower intensive operations. “The relatively surgical application of force held the promise of avoiding that politically, militarily, socially, and morally unacceptable outcome”⁶¹ associated with house-to-house fighting and better demonstrated a message of liberation consistent with Presidential policy and communications.

On the evening of 19 March 2003, the President abruptly ended his anti-Saddam lobbying effort. He informed the nation that American and coalition forces had now begun military operations against Iraq. With this, he introduced a second form of strategic communication – the deed – into the fold. Although ongoing military actions would dominate U.S. strategic communication, policy addresses to Americans, Iraqis, and international audiences would continue to explain Bush’s vision to secure Iraq’s future. The President continued to claim that American ambition in Iraq was simple and selfless – “to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people,”⁶² during television addresses. He explained that despite this ambition and coalition skill, some combat actions would result in unintended civilian casualties and suffering, ultimately hindering the war effort and diminishing America’s strategic end state. The President acknowledged the Iraqi use of human shields to protect military assets and attempted to beat the news-cycle and the expected outcry following unwanted civilian

⁶¹ Gregory Fontenot, E.J. Degen and David Tohn, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom*. (Ft Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2005), 50.

⁶² George W. Bush, “President Bush Addresses the Nation.” March 19, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030319-17.html> (accessed October 17, 2008).

deaths. While the primary justification for war – the destruction of WMD and their delivery mechanisms – still remained, communications would shift to reassure Iraqi's and the international community that American might was consistent with her values.

Although military operations had begun without any additional U.N. Security Council Resolutions, the President had built a coalition of more than 35 supporting countries. His closing remarks spoke of the inevitability of this confrontation by saying we “will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now...so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.”⁶³ With his words that evening, the President had ushered in the ‘Bush Doctrine,’ beginning the era of pre-emptive warfare.

Early successes in Iraq led to a joint statement by President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair on 8 April 2003. The leaders of the major coalition military partners collectively explained coalition aims to provide an environment where Iraqis can “determine their own fate democratically and peacefully.”⁶⁴ Broadly, they stated that while defeating Saddam Hussein's remaining military forces and searching for WMD, coalition forces would take steps to safeguard Muslim and Iraqi cultural sites, Iraqi natural resources, and increase flows of food, medicine and humanitarian assistance. Demonstrating that the ongoing fight was against the government, not Iraqi citizens, was a key component of the coalition effort to secure a peaceful transition to democracy. Despite the U.N.'s reluctance to endorse military intervention in the Persian Gulf, both

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ George W. Bush and Tony Blair, “Joint Statement by President Bush, Prime Minister Blair on Iraq's Future.” April 8, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/04/print/20030408-1.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

President and Prime Minister acknowledged the vital role that the organization would play in reconstruction, humanitarian assistance, and post-conflict governance. Finally, they stated that “coalition forces will remain in Iraq as long as necessary to help the Iraqi people...but no longer.”⁶⁵

The next day, on 9 April 2003, a statue of Saddam Hussein was toppled in Baghdad’s al-Firdos square. Although this wasn’t the end of the operations, or of Saddam Hussein, media coverage left audiences with that appearance. Video footage of U.S. soldiers standing by as an Iraqi mob desecrated Hussein’s likeness reinforced America’s position that her combat troops would be greeted as liberators. Unfortunately, policy makers and planners had not accounted for the possibility that the celebration was predominantly based on lifting Saddam’s oppression, and not thankfulness for an invasive American presence. War planning did not include forces to control widespread lawless mobs like that seen in al-Firdos square, consequently failure to contain this and similar destructive acts of defiance would eventually undermine America’s regional vision and ambitions for a secure Iraq.

As coalition forces continued clearing operations inside Iraq, the President spoke to the Iraqi people affirming coalition intentions by saying that “Our only enemy is Saddam’s brutal regime – and that regime is your enemy as well.” Despite the growing U.S. military presence, the President assured Iraqis that they owned the future of Iraq, and that coalition goals, already well known to United States and international audiences, were clear and limited. He told Iraqis that we would end a brutal regime, help maintain law and order, respect religious traditions and assist in the construction of a peaceful,

⁶⁵ George W. Bush and Tony Blair, “Joint Statement by President Bush, Prime Minister Blair on Iraq’s Future.” April 8, 2003.

representative government before our military forces left the region.⁶⁶ With these comments, the President cemented Iraqi expectations that military forces would be able to provide basic security and meet their fundamental needs in a post-Saddam Iraq.

General Tommy Franks delivered his “Freedom Message to the Iraqi people” one week later, on 16 Apr 2003. Eight days after coalition forces first entered Baghdad, the coalition commander made his first visit to the city, where he declared that his army arrived with the purposes of deposing Saddam Hussein for his failure to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions. Echoing President Bush’s commitment, he told Iraqi’s that he would rebuild a free and independent Iraq under a representative government. He affirmed ideas inherent in the president’s message of liberation by proclaiming that coalition forces claimed nothing after their victory, and that Iraq’s treasures would remain with the Iraqi people.⁶⁷

Unfortunately, the meaning of the President’s words, and General Franks’ proclamation were eroded two weeks later when a company from the 82d Airborne Division operating from the Al-Kaahd school in Fallujah fired on a demonstrating crowd killing 13 and wounding between 45 and 50.⁶⁸ Accounts differ in that both soldiers and demonstrators claim that the other fired first. Military claims that soldiers returned AK-

⁶⁶ George W. Bush, “President’s Message to the Iraqi People.” April 10, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/04/print/20030410-2.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

⁶⁷ Tommy Franks, *American Soldier*. (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 528-9. “I, General Tommy R. Franks, Commander of Coalition Forces, do hereby proclaim that: Coalition forces have come as liberators, not conquerors. WE have come to eliminate an oppressive and aggressive regime that refused to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions requiring the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. The Coalition is committed to helping the people of Iraq heal their wounds, build their own representative government, become a free and independent people and regain a respected place in the world. We will ensure that Iraq’s oil is protected as a national asset of and for the Iraqi people. Iraq and its property belong to the Iraqi people and the Coalition makes no claim of ownership by force of arms.”

⁶⁸ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty “Iraq: U.S. Says Soldiers Fired On First in Incident.” April 29, 2003, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iraq/2003/iraq-030429-rfel-185007.htm> (accessed March 9, 2009); Karl Penhaul, “Conflicting Stories from Fallujah,” *CNN.com* (April 29, 2003), <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/04/29/otsc.penhaul> (accessed March 9, 2009).

47 fire were met by demonstrator challenges suggesting that they threw only stones before falling victim to an extended hail of American bullets.

Two days later on 30 April 2003, a second demonstration at the same site was again met with gunfire and resulted in 2 dead and 16 injured as a larger crowd of nearly 1,000 protested earlier violence. Lt. Col. Tobin Green, commander of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment's 2nd squadron, reported that his six-vehicle convoy came under fire when passing the demonstration. He said that his unit fired back, "first into the air and then toward the location where soldiers believed the gunfire was originating."⁶⁹

Independent of the cause of American gunfire that ended demonstrations in Fallujah, publicity surrounding the events damaged America's case before an Iraqi, international and U.S. audience. While U.S. forces suffered no casualties, these two events resulted in 15 Iraqi deaths and 61-76 injuries. Stories of dead Iraqi children increased tension between citizens and soldiers, and were only slowly met with American explanations and denials. This demonstrated both the power of technology to give voice to unsubstantiated claims, and the importance of timely communications in setting an agenda, and limiting the impact from competing messages. Ultimately these strategic communication failures diminished faith in America's stated motivation for deposing Hussein, and provided an example of American forces in the role of brutal conquerors to uneasy Sunni Muslims. Disaffected opportunists, aware of Sunni wariness surrounding their diminished future role in Iraq, benefitted most from America's missteps and used these events to fuel

⁶⁹ Scott Wilson, "U.S. Forces Kill Two During Iraqi Demonstration: Some Baath Party Loyalists May Be Provoking U.S. Soldiers," *Washington Post*, April 30, 2003, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/a61414-2003Apr30?language=printer> (accessed March 11, 2009).

Muslim and Arab distrust in their liberators.⁷⁰ Clearly the events in Fallujah eroded support for Americans even amongst the most ardent anti-Ba'athists who had celebrated Baghdad's fall just three weeks prior. "At first we believed they came as liberators," said Behjet Najem, a 33-year-old teacher at the Leader's School who witnessed the shooting. "Now it seems they are not that at all. We think of them as occupiers."⁷¹ The size of the crowd at both rallies suggests that Najem's voice spoke for many Iraqis.

Nearly three weeks later, President Bush took a flight to the USS Abraham Lincoln, a returning aircraft carrier steaming towards the coast of San Diego following a record deployment. The President had prepared remarks to the crew of the Lincoln, and a broader American audience as he opened by saying, "major combat operations in Iraq have ended...and now our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country."⁷² Those words signified to the world that a tyrant had fallen, and that his people were now free due to the efforts of American, British, Australian and Polish troops. The President's speech marked a major milestone in the completion of his pre-conflict policy objectives. The fall of the Hussein government gave hope that Iraq would never again sponsor terrorism. The President's speech was more than a victory announcement, and its purpose was threefold: first it served to reaffirm the universality of American values; second, it detailed terrorist ties to the regime and demonstrated the

⁷⁰ Ibid. "Iraqi anti-Hussein leaders have predicted that mid-level Baath Party loyalists, who enjoyed the perquisites of power in places such as Fallujah during three decades of Baath rule, will seek to provoke U.S. forces into violence against ordinary Iraqis in order to discredit the American role. In that light, the uprising in Fallujah may represent the first of many in former Baath Party strongholds as the old order gives way to a U.S.-engineered government that could mean not only fewer privileges but also future criminal trials for Hussein loyalists."

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² George W. Bush, "President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended." May 1, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/print/20030501-15.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

value of the Bush Doctrine; finally, it described the continuing, long-term nature of the conflict ahead.

To re-affirm U.S. values, the President first equated liberty to “food, water and air” and said that “the advance of freedom is the surest strategy to undermine the appeal of terror in the world.”⁷³ His interests were to demonstrate that American values were responsible for turning hatred into hope and promise by allowing the peaceful pursuit of a better life – in Iraq and beyond. Although the President’s words ring true to an American audience, some Muslims in Iraq were left with a visceral reaction to what he said. The dichotomy between U.S. and foreign audiences is best described by the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication where they wrote:

“Americans are convinced that the U.S. is a benevolent ‘superpower’ that elevates values emphasizing freedom and prosperity as at the core of its own national interest. Thus for Americans, ‘U.S. values’ are in reality ‘world values.’ Muslims see American policies as inimical to their values, American rhetoric about freedom and democracy as hypocritical, and American actions as deeply threatening.”⁷⁴

Intended for a U.S. and coalition audiences, Bush’s address was meant as a transition between fighting *against* Saddam and fighting *for* lasting peace formed in the image and likeness of American values. To Iraqis though, the ongoing lawlessness provided an image of freedom and liberty that differed from and undermined the President’s vision.

The President went on to explain the damage done to al Qaeda through operations in Iraq, saying, “We’ve removed an ally...and cut off a source of terrorist funding” and that “no terrorist network will gain weapons of mass destruction from the Iraqi regime.”⁷⁵

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, 45.

⁷⁵ George W. Bush, “President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended.” May 1, 2003.

He suggested that coalition military prowess in Iraq solidified American resolve towards the freedom agenda and enabled the promise of future military operations worldwide. He pledged that “any person...committing or planning terrorist attacks” or that “harbors terrorists,” or that has “ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction” is a threat to the world that he would confront. According to the President, the surgical precision displayed in unseating Saddam Hussein meant that the U.S. could “achieve military objectives without directing violence against civilians.” This newly demonstrated capability provided “a great moral advance,” as the guilty now “have far more to fear from war than the innocent.” This great moral advance would further justify the use of pre-emption as a guarantor of future American security.

Finally, according to the President, these new capabilities would become a springboard for larger ambitions in the war on terror. He stated that “al Qaeda is wounded, not destroyed,” and that their threat was still real. Ultimately, he claimed that American efforts in Iraq turned the tide in a long, but finite war against terrorism, and proved that “free nations will press on to victory.”⁷⁶

Despite his technical correctness in calling major combat operations complete and his warnings about the long road ahead, the unintended consequence of the President’s speech was a hopeful expectation that the second war in Iraq was over. The White House, through visual images accompanying the President’s speech, manufactured this false expectation.⁷⁷ The President’s trip began with a “carrier landing” and a march

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*. (Washington DC: US Naval War College, 2007), IX-173. “A victory in the major combat phase of a campaign, no matter how decisive, cannot secure the accomplishment of a war’s political objectives unless one’s strategic success is consolidated in the post hostilities phase.”

across the deck in a flight suit, and the Lincoln's superstructure was draped in a banner proclaiming "Mission Accomplished." This expectation nourished impatience with slow progress, increasing loss of life and larger than forecast economic costs, undermining the President and his party in future elections.

Two weeks after his proclamation aboard the Lincoln, Paul Bremer was given responsibility for transitioning Iraq as the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). Bremer worked as an agent of the President and surprisingly reported thru the Secretary Rumsfeld at the DOD, not Secretary Powell at the DOS. Within 10 days of taking leadership of the CPA, Bremer informed the President of his goals for Iraq, and the chief problems that would hinder him along the path to success. Broadly, his goals were to show the people of Iraq that Saddam Hussein and the Ba'athists were finished, and that life would improve for the average citizen.⁷⁸ Bremer chose these goals carefully for two main reasons. First, Hussein and his leadership elements had proven elusive in the past. Consequently, Bremer had to confirm that he would never return to power. Second, from a practical standpoint, if life did not improve for the Iraqis after Saddam Hussein, American imperialism and incompetence would replace Hussein's brutality, leaving the average Iraqi in a no-win situation. Standing between Bremer and his vision of a future democratic Iraq were a growing lack of security and the absence basic services in the aftermath of the fall of Iraq's government institutions. Presidential communications explained that both of these areas had been addressed during planning. Additionally, Rumsfeld's February address aboard the Intrepid increased both American and Iraqi

⁷⁸ Paul Bremer, letter to the President of the United States, May 22, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/ref/washington/04bremer-text1.html>. (accessed January 14, 2009).

expectations alike by saying that our missteps in Afghanistan would be corrected in Iraq due to our extensive pre-conflict preparations.

Coalition pre-war plans anticipated Bremer's security goals for Iraq, and Lieutenant General McKiernan, the Combined Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC), intended for a rolling transition from active military conflict to coalition control and stability operations in Iraq. Immediately behind the main fighting forces, this transition depended heavily on the Iraqi police, legal system, provincial governments, government ministries and most importantly, the "surrendered" military.⁷⁹ Because of his reliance on Iraqi security forces for post-war security, McKiernan needed to limit the destruction of critical command and control elements for use immediately following coalition victory.⁸⁰ McKiernan correctly recognized that securing lasting Iraqi peace would require more troops than needed to depose Saddam Hussein, and substantially more troops than he was assigned.⁸¹

Similarly, coalition pre-war communication had touted the rapid restoration of basic Iraqi civil services, and a return to normalcy for most citizens according to Lieutenant General Garner (retired) from ORHA. Garner assumed that McKiernan would establish a secure environment after Saddam was toppled so that his team could provide humanitarian and reconstruction assistance.⁸² American expectations for only minor reconstruction requirements were based on estimates that precision attacks would

⁷⁹ Michael R. Gordon and Bernard Trainor. *Cobra II* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 155. "It was vital to establish an immediate security presence so that the population would retain confidence in their liberators. The advisers would train the Iraqis in modern police tactics, weed out the committed Ba'athists, and help maintain order."

⁸⁰ Ibid., 145-146.

⁸¹ Ibid., 157. "...if the Iraqi police did not go back to work immediately after the war ended, there would be a breakdown of law and order before the United States was in a position to help."

⁸² Ibid., 153.

spare power, water and sewer distribution capacity, and urban infrastructure. Although American weaponry wasn't responsible for wanton infrastructure destruction, this expectation proved far from correct.⁸³ Michael Gordon relayed that "A nagging worry [of Garner's] was a possible breakdown of some of Iraq's essential services – water, power, health," and that "any gap in providing such services 'might be interpreted by the international community as a failure of the [United States Government].'"⁸⁴ Garner's worries were grounded in a 1996 UNICEF estimate that upwards of 500,000 Iraqi children had died as a result of crippling economic sanctions in the eleven years following the first Gulf War.⁸⁵ In believing that the restoration of services would be easy, and not planning for massive, timely, reconstruction, Americans were jeopardizing the strategic success, achievable after tactical and operational battlefield victories.

Although both combat and reconstruction leaders understood the challenges in what became Bremer's vision, they were not prepared or able to conduct sufficient security operations or restore services soon enough to keep the faith of many Iraqis. In addition to those shortcomings, Bremer began a series of ill-conceived actions that amplified them.

Decades long Sunni Muslim dominance over the majority Shia Muslim population characterized the politics and governance of Saddam Hussein. Consequently, government administrators and the profession bureaucrats that greased the wheels of society were almost exclusively Sunni. Sunni domination extended into the police forces,

⁸³ Carl Strock, interview by author, quoted in Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 150. "Our whole focus on our reconstruction effort was really not to go in and fix this country, but to fix what we broke. And we sort of made the assumption that the country was functioning beforehand. I had a dramatic underestimation of the condition of the Iraqi infrastructure, which turned out to be one of our biggest problems, and not the war damage."

⁸⁴ Gordon and Trainor, 156.

⁸⁵ Bacevich, 57.

military leadership, social structures and economic elites. With the downfall of Hussein, and the 16 May 2003 issuance of CPA Order 1, Iraqi society was turned on its head.⁸⁶ Government bureaucrats and technocrats, the backbone of governance were instantly transformed into a disenfranchised lot, with expectations that they would become a despised, persecuted, minority. Effectively, the order disbanded the Ba'ath party, removed many party members from their positions and possibly denied them any future role in the public sector. In addition, it initiated automatic criminal conduct investigations for most senior party members. The far reaching implications of this policy were built on idealism, not pragmatism, and its issuance, although a cause for temporary celebration for some became a sign of American short-sidedness to others.

Ba'athists holding positions requiring technical expertise at hospitals, universities and public utilities were dismissed by a guilty-until-proven-innocent policy. This denied employment and opportunity to technically proficient bureaucrats guilty only of membership in an organization to secure a job, and a livelihood. This policy greatly contributed to the CPA inherited difficulties during fledgling reconstruction efforts and hindered basic governance. First, it disenfranchised professional wage earners. Second, it produced a capability void affecting basic government services. Finally, it removed Iraqis from participation in early efforts to rebuild their own country.⁸⁷ Collectively, these failings brought about uncertainty, and showed that despite the ease with which

⁸⁶ Coalition Provision Authority. *Order Number 1: De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society*. (Baghdad: 2003).

⁸⁷ William Flavin, "Planning for Conflict Termination and Post-Conflict Success." *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 107. "Appropriately involving local institutions and agencies with the international effort is a challenging but essential task. The ultimate goal is to turn the country back over to its own people,"

Hussein was removed from power, the transition to a better-than-Hussein government would be far more difficult and drawn out than expected by the Iraqis.

Despite the problems associated with de-Ba'athification, the ramifications of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483, passed on 22 May 2003, reinforced United States stated policy to begin a new era absent Saddam Hussein.⁸⁸ Just 12 days after the liberation of Baghdad, the U.S. pushed the Security Council to lift sanctions on Iraq dating from the 1991 invasion of Kuwait. The adoption of this resolution ended the Oil for Food program and demonstrated a first step towards defining the role of the U.N. in the reconstruction of the country, and its transition to a new form of government. That same day, President Bush announced his desire to quickly establish “an Iraqi interim administration” based on broad based representation of all Iraqi minority populations to help overcome their dictatorial legacy. He pledged a continued U.S. and coalition security partnership in Iraq for only as long as necessary to ensure that transition to a united, representative democracy was underway.⁸⁹ This reinforced coalition claims that the foreign armies amassed in Iraq were indeed liberation forces. Any optimism associated with either UN SCR 1483 or the pledge of a rapid transition to Iraqi authority would prove short-lived. The very next day, the CPA would issue an order that further undermined the President's position.

In pursuing the role of liberator, not conqueror, the U.S. had long planned to preserve the military institutions of Iraq following their defeat to maintain stability and eventually meet national and regional security needs. Despite this, Bremer penned a 22

⁸⁸ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 1483 The situation between Iraq and Kuwait* (New York: 2003)

⁸⁹ George W. Bush, “President's Statement on U.N. Vote Lifting Sanctions on Iraq.” May 22, 2003, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030522-11.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

May 03 letter to the President informing him of a quixotic policy change. Bremer emphatically stated that he would dissolve both military and intelligence services in a manner more robust than de-Ba'athification to demonstrate American commitment to a new regional start.⁹⁰ The President responded with a statement of his full support and confidence in Bremer's leadership.⁹¹ With that, the once formidable institutions instantly dissolved into greater Iraqi society.

The single biggest failing of U.S. policy in Iraq was the decision to dismantle the military institutions. Although Iraq's army and intelligence services were sources of great pain for the persecuted populations of Iraq, they had the potential to be wellsprings for security and stability after careful renovation. U.S. stated policy prior to 23 May 2003, when the CPA Order Number 2 entitled "Dissolution of Entities" was released, was to preserve the Iraqi military for future use.⁹² Abruptly, and without any public debate or explanation from the Congress or President, this policy changed. Unfortunately, this change caught coalition military leaders by surprise.⁹³

The net result was the unemployment of 400,000⁹⁴ members of the military rank and file. Although most were awarded stipends, officers in the grade of Colonel or above were stripped of that as well. Bremer's policy allowed relief to those that successfully proved to his satisfaction that they were not senior party officials. Similar to the de-Ba'athification effort, the guilty-until-proven-innocent policy was damaging to credible

⁹⁰ Paul Bremer, letter to the President of the United States, May 22, 2003.

⁹¹ George W. Bush, letter to the CPA Administrator, Paul Bremer, 23 May 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/ref/washington/04bremer-text2.html> (accessed January 14, 2009).

⁹² Coalition Provision Authority. *Order Number 2: Dissolution of Entities*. (Baghdad: 2003). "...the prior Iraqi regime used certain government entities to oppress the Iraqi people and as instruments of torture, repression and corruption." Dissolution of the entity was thought to outweigh any value in its reformation.

⁹³ Wright and Reese, 94.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

promises of American styled justice associated with liberation, and to the psyche of Iraq's professional senior soldiers. Without Iraqi security forces, there were only two means available to contain the dissatisfaction and maintain security: increased coalition security efforts, and through the continued good will and patience of the Iraqi people. Neither was in the domain of coalition control due to the relatively small number of forces in Iraq, and the insufficient nature of the Iraqi infrastructure.

On the surface, perceived American intentions uncovered by the 'surprise' implementation of this policy proved unpalatable to affected Iraqis. Behind the scene effects in the United States smelled and tasted far worse. George Packer concluded that this sweeping policy change was made off the cuff, by a few individuals in a Pentagon vacuum, with no consultation beyond the DOD.⁹⁵ This suggests that the timeline for American involvement in Iraq was not clear to senior policy makers, and that methods to achieve U.S. objectives were even more obscured.

United States policy for democratic transition in Iraq was generally supported by the United Nations. The U.N. role established in UN SCR 1483 was advanced in August with UN SCR 1500.⁹⁶ This resolution welcomed the steps towards Iraqi self-governance demonstrated in the July selection of Interim Governing Council members. In addition, the U.N. established the Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), providing structured manpower to rapidly advance efforts to create an independent, permanent, representative government.

⁹⁵ George Packer, "The Bremer-bush Letters." *New Yorker*. (September 4, 2007), <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/georgepacker/2007/09/paul-bremer-fo.html> (accessed January 14, 2009).

⁹⁶ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 1483 The situation between Iraq and Kuwait* (New York, 2003).

Speaking to the U.N. General Assembly to commemorate the second anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, President Bush attempted to narrow the divides separating supporters of Iraqi military actions from those who opposed it. Despite the differences about the use of force to accomplish coalition and Security Council goals, there was “unity among us on the fundamental principles and objectives,” seen in collective security and the advancement of human rights. The purpose of Bush’s remarks was to solidify U.N. support for reconstruction and governance in Iraq. To that ends, he outlined continued American intervention in “precision raids against terrorists and holdouts” who continued a war against the Iraqi people in an effort to stabilize the country, secure any weapons of mass destruction and recruit and train military and police forces for the future. He articulated that U.S. goals had shifted; the “primary goal of our coalition in Iraq is self-government for the people” to advance Iraq as a democracy and inspire the greater Middle East.⁹⁷

The United Nations Security Council responded to the Presidents words with the adoption of UN SCR 1511 on 16 October 2003.⁹⁸ The resolution recognized that Iraqi self-governance would temporarily require “international support for restoration of conditions of stability and security,” to allow the drafting of a constitution and free and fair voting for that document and the resulting government. Security and stability would be ensured through the use of general U.N. resources, the establishment of Iraqi police and security forces, and humanitarian relief. Most importantly, this resolution authorized a multinational force under unified command to take all necessary measures to achieve

⁹⁷ George W. Bush, “President Bush Addresses United Nations General Assembly.” September 23, 2003, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030923-4.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

⁹⁸ U.N. Security Council. *Resolution 1511 The situation between Iraq and Kuwait* (New York: 2003).

those stated goals, and designated the United States as the executor and reporting official for this role.⁹⁹

One month later, Bush gave Trevor Kavanagh from “The Sun” a 17 November 2003 interview, focusing on the British-American alliance evident in ongoing military operations in Iraq. The President detailed two major ideas concerning the war on terror. First, he claimed that the world is much safer than it was before operations in Iraq. Finally, he assured the audience that war was a last resort for America.¹⁰⁰

The President contended that the world was “much safer” following armed intervention in Iraq for three major reasons. First, conflict in Iraq and follow-on security operations had given the world an undeniable visible reminder of the threats that exist to civilized society. Second, Iraq had provided the stage on which to dismantle al Qaeda and disrupt its operations. Finally, he claimed that intervention had actually strengthened international institutions. In a repeated theme, he claimed that multiple un-enforced United Nations resolutions “became weak, became just words.” He furthered that coalition enforcement of the anti-terrorism provisions of UN SCR 1441 (2002) signified serious future consequences to regimes supporting terrorists by providing a historical backstop for the resolution.

In advancing his second idea, that war was the last choice of the U.S., the President claimed that American security had been jeopardized by a WMD-terrorism nexus. He said that Hussein had ignored 12 prior opportunities to avoid armed conflict in

⁹⁹ Although UN SCR 1511 authorized the introduction of a multinational force into Iraq, the force would only remain at the behest of the Iraqi sovereign government and would require re-authorization on an annual basis. UN SCR 1546, 1637 and 1723 extended U.S. lead of multinational forces supporting UNAMI through December 2007.

¹⁰⁰ George W. Bush, “Interview of the President by Trevor Kavanagh of ‘The Sun’.” November 17, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/print/20031117-3.html> (accessed January 14, 2009).

a dangerous cat and mouse game, and that America's safety could not be risked for any longer. He acknowledged that war was universally disliked, but that U.S. actions were justifiable.¹⁰¹

The President's interview with Kavanagh was followed by a state visit, where he challenged U.N. inaction and justified America's armed intervention in Iraq. He stated that Great Britain and America had done everything in their "power to prevent the United Nations from solemnly choosing its own irrelevance and inviting the fate of the League of Nations. It's not enough to meet the dangers of the world with resolutions; we must meet those dangers with resolve."¹⁰² Bush balanced continued criticism about the limited size of the coalition by suggesting an American preference to "work with other responsible governments." Ultimately, however, he supported near unilateral armed intervention with ideology, holding that American motivations and values and a "naïve faith that liberty can change the world" supported his chosen course of action. His claim was that uprightness in America's policy goals for Iraq justified the means he had chosen to employ – armed intervention in Iraq.

November produced a break in major presidential policy pronouncements that was interrupted by the 14 December 2003 news that Saddam Hussein had been captured in hiding during a military raid on Tikrit.¹⁰³ Bush's message was that Hussein would "face the justice he denied to millions." More importantly, he used the occasion to speak

¹⁰¹ George W. Bush, "Interview of the President by Trevor Kavanagh of 'The Sun'." November 17, 2003. Bush acknowledged dismay about "...why a President would commit to war. Because nobody likes war."

¹⁰² George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Iraq Policy at Whitehall Palace in London." November 19, 2003, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2003/26360.htm> (accessed January 14, 2009). "The League of Nations, lacking both credibility and will, collapsed at the first challenge of the dictators."

¹⁰³ George W. Bush, "President Bush Addresses the Nation on the Capture of Saddam Hussein." December 14, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/12/print/20031214-3.html> (accessed November 24, 2009).

directly to the Ba'athist holdouts responsible for the current violence in Iraq. The President told them that "there will be no return to the corrupt power and privilege" they held under Saddam Hussein, and he reassured the Iraqi people that they would "not have to fear the rule of Saddam Hussein ever again." Although this milestone meant, "a dark and painful era is over," he informed Americans and Iraqis alike that "the capture of Saddam Hussein does not mean the end of violence." The President rightly expected that the remaining terrorists in Iraq would continue to kill the innocent, providing a threat in the heart of the Middle East, and "a direct threat to the American people." Similar to remarks delivered on the Lincoln six-months earlier, his words were intended to manage expectations associated with the celebratory fallout from Hussein's capture. Despite his words, the images of an unkempt Hussein, extracted from a 'spider hole,' brought hope to millions in both America and Iraq. For Americans this milestone created expectations for a reduction in organized violence against troops, while Iraqis were content with the relief that came from removing the lingering fear that Hussein would return to power and punish these who had cooperated with the coalition. Hussein's capture would provide a great example of American values, morality, and democratic intentions in an impending open and fair trial focused on providing justice for Iraq's victims, and not pre-determined vengeance to a long-term foe.

The 2004 State of the Union provided an opportunity to demonstrate military success and political resolve to the American people. The President explained that our new enemies were Hussein's shadowy supporters and foreign terrorists flocking to Iraq to join in the violence. He claimed that with Iraq's growing democracy, our mission would be to contain "violence and fear" aimed at shaking "the will of our country and our

friends.” He also demonstrated that less than a year ago, Iraq was ruled by a dictator, but “today our coalition is working with the Iraqi Governing Council...for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty by the end of June.”¹⁰⁴

President Bush expounded on his State of the Union remarks on the first anniversary of the start of combat operations in Iraq. He reiterated international interests in “a free, successful, stable, Iraq” despite remaining controversy about the methods used to achieve that goal. He stretched this idea in challenging, “Who would prefer Saddam’s torture chambers still be open? Who would wish that more mass graves were still being filled? Who would begrudge the Iraqi people their long-awaited liberation?”¹⁰⁵ While the answer to the President’s rhetorical question would be a near unanimous “no one”, Bush unfortunately accepted this as an affirmation of American action in Iraq. Without removing doubt in armed intervention as the only way to liberate Iraqi’s from Hussein, the President inferred that in Iraq, the ends had justified the means.

The President also demonstrated terrorist efforts to test coalition will in this struggle for stability and democracy in Iraq, highlighting the recent Madrid bombings. By again bringing the front lines of their campaign to western civilians, he suggested that terrorists attempted to demoralize and “divide us from one another.”¹⁰⁶ He followed this example with a challenge for continued resolve, equating the difference between inaction and action in this cause to disparities between “good and evil, freedom and slavery, and

¹⁰⁴ George W. Bush, “President Discusses Iraq in State of the Union Address.” January 20, 2004, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040120-12.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

¹⁰⁵ George W. Bush, “President Bush Reaffirms Resolve to War on Terror, Iraq and Afghanistan.” March 19, 2004, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/03/print/20040319-3.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

life and death,” turning Iraq into a page in the broader strategy of the war against terror.¹⁰⁷

April and May of 2004 marked a turning point in perception about the ongoing intervention in Iraq. Iraq’s conventional forces were replaced by the shadowy forces described in the President’s recent State of the Union as our primary enemy in a battle to secure Fallujah, a corner of the “Sunni triangle.” Consequently, Fallujah became the birthplace of an infant insurgency.

“This organized opposition was never a monolithic movement – united under one set of leaders and armed with a single ideology. Instead, the Iraqi insurgency consisted of a constantly changing constellation of groups and leaders who espoused a variety of purposes and ideologies and used a myriad of techniques in their opposition to the Coalition, the Iraqi Government, and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).”¹⁰⁸

The organizing principles, unity of purpose, and unity of effort associated with insurgent activities proved meaningless. The long term purpose of the insurgency was secondary to the certain short term results that came from successful insurgent operations to destabilize authorities –American or Iraqi. Iraqi insurgents, as a collective, had both asymmetric means and asymmetric motivations in their fight against authority.¹⁰⁹ Combating insurgent “means” required sustainable security forces in numbers exceeding what was currently available in Iraq. Combating insurgent motives required strategic communication in support of security actions and government policy. Given the budding

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Wright and Reese, 87. Authors suggested that the USG initially failed to identify the insurgency. Once identified, the USG did not recognize that it was comprised of several varying groups, with differing foci.

¹⁰⁹ David Fastabend, “Transformation and Operational Art,” in *Rethinking the Principles of War*, ed. Anthony D. McIvor (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004): 155-166. “Some enemies, indeed, are almost perfectly asymmetric. They are asymmetric in means. They are asymmetric in motivation. They don’t value what we value; they don’t fear what we fear.”

insurgency, security shortcomings would undercut U.S. policy and values and fuel its growth for months to come.

Dan Senor, a senior CPA advisor, attempted to address some U.S. policy shortcomings that were fueling Iraqi dissatisfaction and contributing to the insurgency in his remarks on 23 April 2004. Senor clarified Bremer's earlier remarks regarding changes to the de-Ba'athification policy, saying that it "was and remains the right policy for Iraq"¹¹⁰ despite several recent changes in its implementation. U.S. efforts were focused on addressing grievances associated with the guilty-until-proven-innocent aspects of the policy that had left thousands of teachers and professors unemployed, despite their party membership "in name only." Procedures adopted in October 2003 and January 2004 allowed former Ba'athists a means to return to public service, but more than 10,000 people who had applied and been granted reinstatement by local councils had not yet been allowed to return to their jobs. Senor's purpose was to explain that the delays in re-introducing vetted teachers into the workforce were a "procedural snafu"¹¹¹ that will now be corrected, and their reintroduction to the work force was a minor correction, and not a policy change. Despite this, there was skepticism about CPA actions, in part because the appeals process took so long to start, and once implemented, the results were not effectively enforced. That "innocent" Iraqis could not return to their jobs highlighted incompetence in the actions of governing authorities and angered thousands.

¹¹⁰ Dan Senor, "Coalition Provisional Authority Briefing." April 23, 2004, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2527> (accessed January 23, 2009).

¹¹¹ Ibid.

Prior to the March 2003 coalition invasion in Iraq, Abu Ghraib prison was by all accounts one of the most notorious facilities of its kind in the world. Saddam Hussein and his regime crowded the cells there with criminals and enemies. The only relief from the vile living conditions was torture or death during weekly executions. After Saddam and his Ba'athists fell from power, like many government facilities, the prison was looted, and anything of value was removed and sold.¹¹² Unwisely, coalition forces secured and repaired the facility and began using it to detain common criminals, coalition criminals and high value insurgent leaders. Coalition repair and reuse of this facility concerned Iraqi's who thought that this remnant of the dictatorial regime might have better served Iraq as a pile of rubble than a reminder of "the centerpiece of Saddam's empire of fear."¹¹³

Iraqi sentiments were validated on April 28, 2004, when Dan Rather from "60 Minutes" graphically revealed that American guards in the rebuilt facility had dehumanized prisoners. Explicit sexual photographs of abusive acts committed on prisoners proved unacceptable in any culture, but were found particularly offensive across the Arab world. Although the U.S. military had discovered these acts and relieved and prosecuted the involved soldiers and their leaders, the revelation of what American jailors had done to Iraqi's post-invasion was unexplainable. When contrasted with professed American values, and repeated Presidential addresses that had justified war in part to end Saddam Hussein's crime spree against humanity, these acts jeopardized strategic success by alienating all Iraqi's and imparting distrust into already wary minds.

¹¹² Seymour M. Hersh, "Torture at Abu Ghraib." *New Yorker*. (10 May 2004), http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510fa_fact (accessed March 15, 2009).

¹¹³ *60 Minutes*, "Court Martial in Iraq (transcript)," April 28, 2004, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CBS405A.html> (accessed October 16, 2008).

“We went into Iraq to stop things like this from happening, and indeed, here they are happening under our tutelage,” relayed Marine Lieutenant Colonel Bill Cowan.¹¹⁴

The sheer volume and variety of photographs detailing these abuses indicated that the events in Abu Ghraib were not an isolated incident, and to that effect, Major General Mark Kimmitt said:

“This is wrong. This is reprehensible, but this is not representative of the 150,000 soldiers that are over here...I’d say the same thing to the American people.... Don’t judge your army based on the actions of a few.”¹¹⁵

Kimmitt was faced with the near impossible task of reducing the negative impact of these actions into that of an unfortunate but punishable mistake that would be appropriately handled thru American rule of law. Best said by Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo of the Vatican, “intelligent people in Arab countries understand that in a democracy such episodes are *not* hidden and *are* punished...still the vast mass of the people – under the influence of Arab media – cannot but feel aversion and hate for the West growing inside themselves.”¹¹⁶ To Iraqi’s recently released from the shackles of Saddam Hussein, this aversion to the ‘West’ became easy to assign exclusively to U.S. occupation forces.

One month later, on 24 May 04, the Presidents targeted remarks to a senior military audience at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. His words reinforced ideas delivered in the 2004 State of the Union address, and provided another example of the resolve of our opponents in Iraq to split the coalition. The President described the terrorist assassination of Iraqi Governing Council President, Izzedin

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Associated Press. “Vatican calls prison abuse a bigger blow to U.S. than Sept 11.” *USA Today*. May 12, 2005, http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2004-05-12-vatican-iraqi-abuse_x.htm (accessed March 15, 2009).

Salleem, and stated that this fanaticism “was not caused by any action of ours, and would not be appeased by any concession.” Despite this, the focus of his address was to detail the ongoing five step process to achieve democracy and freedom in Iraq. Plans started with the transition of authority to a sovereign Iraqi government, continued with the establishment of security, the reconstruction of infrastructure, and encouragement of international support, and ended with movement towards Iraqi elections. The President named the shadowy collective of terrorists, illegal militia and Saddam loyalists an “insurgency” for the first time, and recognized that American military actions had to be tempered with cultural awareness to prevent operations that would alienate the population, and fuel the efforts of our opponents. He claimed that Iraq’s security would be best handled by an all-Iraqi security force and noted progress towards that goal. He detailed training targets and intensity gains, and demonstrated several instance where Iraqi troops performed autonomously, protecting and securing Holy Sites. Though satisfied with progress and short-term security gains, Bush charged that “a representative government that protects basic rights, elected by Iraqis, is the best defense against the return of tyranny...”¹¹⁷ in the long run.

One week later, on 8 June 2004, the U.N. Security Council approved the interim Government of Iraq, solidified a multinational force security partnership and called for future Iraqi elections. President Bush’s remarks at the G8 summit that same day recognized that future elections and the training of Iraqi security forces were the “key[s]

¹¹⁷ George W. Bush, “President Outlines Step to Help Iraq Achieve Democracy and Freedom.” May 24, 2004, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/05/print/20040524-10.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

to long-term security in Iraq.” He also downplayed the lack of commitment of France, Germany, Russia and Canada towards supporting their words with troops.¹¹⁸

Following U.N. approval of the Iraqi interim government and with a self-imposed 30 June 2004 deadline to transfer governmental “power” to Iraq fast approaching, Iraqi ministries began answering to Iraqi politicians. To that end, Secretary Powell remarked to reporters on 18 June 2004 that he was

“...impressed by the way in which the interim Iraqi government has started to function even before they have received full sovereignty. Fifteen ministries are up and running and the prime minister is acting like a prime minister, the president like a president. And so the government is starting to show movement and we hope that the transition will go smoothly and everything we've seen so far suggests it will go smoothly.”¹¹⁹

This willingness and ability on the part of the interim Iraqi government led Paul Bremer to issue CPA order 100¹²⁰ on 28 June 2004. Effectively, this order terminated all CPA authority, and installed Dr. Iyad Allawi, an exiled Ba’athist Hussein collaborator at the Interim Prime Minister for Iraq. This transfer of authority from coalition liberators to Iraqi’s was a major diplomatic milestone. This accomplishment verified President Bush’s aspirations for a free and sovereign Iraq advancing to become a beacon for democracy in the Middle East. Although mostly positive, CPA order 100 was not without controversy. The transfer of power to Prime Minister Allawi was completed two days earlier than had been announced, and conducted under “a veil of secrecy and a tight

¹¹⁸ George W. Bush, “President Discusses Security Council Resolution on Iraq at G8 Summit.” Jun 8, 2004, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/print/20040608-7.html> (accessed November 24, 2008).

¹¹⁹ Colin Powell, “Powell Predicts Smooth Turnover of Sovereignty to Iraqi Government” June 18, 2004, http://www.cpa-iraq.org/pressreleases/20040620_quiet_transfer.html (accessed April 1, 2009).

¹²⁰ Coalition Provision Authority. *Order Number 100: Transition of Laws, Regulations, Orders and Directives Issued by the Coalition Provisional Authority*. (Baghdad: 2004).

security lockdown.”¹²¹ Although these security precautions could be viewed as sensible given the possibility of insurgent attacks, the need for secrecy highlighted the fragility of the interim government and provided little confidence to Iraqi’s, aid workers and investors instrumental in political and physical reconstruction efforts. Highlighting this was the continued need for the interim government to rely on the security provided by multinational forces, effectively hollowing Iraqi claims to sovereignty.

Progress in Afghanistan, and relative success in Iraq brought November 2004 U.S. elections resulting in no change to the status quo in Washington D.C. Despite many hotly contested races, the elections produced only minor changes in the House and Senate, and gave the President four more years to complete the Afghanistan and Iraq chapters in the ongoing war on terror. House Democrats lost three seats to the Republican majority, which stood now at 202-232-1. Likewise, Senate Democrats lost four seats to their opposition, leaving the senate with relative parity at 44-55-1.

More important than the American elections were upcoming Iraqi National Assembly elections in January 2005. These elections would mark the end of the interim government, and a more complete democratic transition for Iraq. To ensure legitimacy, all Iraqi’s needed the opportunity to vote, and this would only be possible with widespread security in all ethnic areas of the country. Thomas Friedman said that “Fallujah was to the Iraqi insurgency what Afghanistan was to Osama bin Laden.”¹²² Prior to any elections in Iraq, insurgent strongholds like Fallujah desperately needed

¹²¹ Editor, *New York Times*. “A secretive transfer in Iraq.” June 29, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/29/opinion/29TUE2.html?ex=1246248000&en=dda2b6432c883a2f&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland> (accessed October 1, 2008).

¹²² Thomas Friedman, “Iraq at the tipping point.” *New York Times*. November 18, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/11/18/opinion/18friedman.html?ex=1258520400&en=099b173ae482fb33&ei=5088> (accessed October 15, 2008).

security so that Iraqi's could vote without fear. This would require forces to move in, restore order and hold the city for an extended period of time. Although the Iraqi government retained sovereignty, and Iraqi security forces were being rapidly trained, the quality of the troops and their willingness to stand and fight was largely dependent on their leaders. While some were strong, others proved uncommitted. Inability to rely on Iraqis for pre-election security in Fallujah dictated a U.S. led cordon-search and hold campaign that proved effective. This effort highlighted the insufficient number of troops America had committed to the war, as holding operations in Fallujah robbed soldiers from other locations and allowed firefights to break out elsewhere.

To that ends, on 20 Dec 2004, the President announced temporary increases in U.S. troop strength to provide security for the upcoming election period.¹²³ He acknowledged that January elections would feature 80 parties, and more than 7,000 candidates to fill 275 vacancies in the transnational assembly and in local legislatures throughout the country. Although the numbers are staggering, he highlighted that this election was just the first step in a democratic process that would result in an October 2005 constitution, and a more permanent government.

Reports of growing security in former hot-spots leading up to transnational elections were overcome by a 12 January 2005 acknowledgement "that the weapons that we all believed were [in Iraq], based on the intelligence, were not there."¹²⁴ Although skepticism about the existence of Iraqi WMD ran rampant following the American invasion, the October 2004 release of the Iraq Survey Group report and an impending

¹²³ George W. Bush, "President holds press conference." March 20, 2004, <http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/12/print/20041220-3.html> (accessed March 9, 2009).

¹²⁴ Scott McClellan, "Press Briefing by Scott McClellan." January 12, 2005, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050112-7.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

addendum validated Saddam's claims and undercut the credibility of the U.S. intelligence community, the President, and Secretary of State Powell. Scott McClellan, the President's Press Secretary, stressed that Hussein had retained the intent and capability for a WMD program and the "he intended to resume his pursuit...once...sanctions were eliminated,"¹²⁵ but these claims proved insufficient to overcome the lack of physical evidence of weapons or their production. When asked if this 'intelligence' failure prevented the President to lobby for future preemptive force, his circular answer said the even knowing what we know today, "the President would have taken the same action, because this is about protecting the American people." He validated the Presidents claim that the United States made the correct decision to intervene in Iraq because the removal of Hussein from power had enhanced freedom and made America more secure. The hubris associated with failing to admit a mistake outright, and advancement of the idea that the ends in Iraq continued to justify American means further undercut strategic success in a manner similar to the President's remarks on the anniversary of invasion 10 months prior.¹²⁶ In losing the primary reason for going to war, the American choice to intervene militarily became indefensible. Ironically it was Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, a noted war hawk, who summed up this sentiment in 2000, when he wrote that "No U.S. president can justify a policy that fails to achieve its intended results by pointing to the purity and rectitude of his intentions."¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ George W. Bush, "President Bush Reaffirms Resolve to War on Terror, Iraq and Afghanistan." March 19, 2004. "Who would prefer Saddam's torture chambers still be open? Who would wish that more mass graves were still being filled? Who would begrudge the Iraqi people their long-awaited liberation?"

¹²⁷ Wolfowitz, Paul. Present Danger. Pg 335. Chapter Title: "Statesmanship in the New Century." P 335.

During his inaugural address on 21 Jan 2005, President Bush's remarks justified U.S. action in Iraq, and held that the future may hold the same for other tyrannical leaders fitting Saddam's mold.

“We have seen our vulnerability and we have seen its deepest source. There is only one force of history that can break the reign of hatred and resentment, and expose the pretensions of tyrants, and reward the hopes of the decent and tolerant, and that is the force of freedom.”¹²⁸

He explained that to “ensure the survival of liberty in our land” we would be increasingly dependent on the “success of liberty in other lands.” U.S. dependence on the liberty and freedom of others would sometimes necessitate armed intervention in undesirable locations and times.

One week later on 30 January 2005, Iraqis made history. The President's congratulatory message to Iraqis followed the courage they demonstrated in taking rightful control of their own destiny by voting in free elections. Although participation varied by region, and Sunni's were broadly disenfranchised by alienation due to the expected outcome or security concerns, an impressive turnout demonstrated an Iraqi preference to fight future political battles peacefully at the ballot box. While this achievement was a critical milestone for the U.S. and President Bush, it was acknowledged as only a continued step in the journey towards lasting democracy and regional freedom initiatives.¹²⁹ Ultimately, the election of national and regional

¹²⁸ George W. Bush, “Text of Bush Inaugural Speech.” January 20, 2005, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050120-1.html> (accessed April 1, 2009).

¹²⁹ George W. Bush, “President Congratulates Iraqi's on Election.” January 30, 2005, <http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/01/print/20050130-2.html> (accessed March 9, 2009). “There's more distance to travel on the road to democracy. Yet Iraqis are proving they're equal to the challenge.”

politicians will only mark a success for Iraq if results strengthen unity, prevent civil war and enable security forces allowing for unaided sovereignty.

Iraqis demonstrated continued success with the democratic process during an October 2005 constitutional referendum. Turnout exceeded that in January transnational elections and was bolstered by increased Sunni participation. The President's remarks on 16 October noted increases in security, resulting in decreased violence during polling, and equated the vote with a "stark contrast to the attitudes and philosophy and strategy of al Qaeda and its terrorist friends and killers."¹³⁰

It was more than six months later before the de-facto Iraqi face of "al Qaeda's terrorist friends and killers" would be brought to justice. President Bush proudly announced to the world that the man Osama Bin Laden called the "prince of al Qaeda in Iraq," Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, had been killed in a coalition attack. Despite the loss of one of its most visible and aggressive leaders, the President said that "we can expect the terrorists and insurgents to carry on without him. We can expect the sectarian violence to continue."¹³¹ Although Bush believed that this event struck a severe blow to al Qaeda, he acknowledged that the insurgency was not beholden to one man, but varying ideologies bent on maintaining disorder to survive. Representing only a small percentage of foreign fighters in the insurgency, Zarqawi and his followers drove violence in Iraq indiscriminately, providing a catalyst for sectarian conflict. Although unexpected, it was universally hoped that these conflicts would abate without their catalyst.

¹³⁰ George W. Bush, "President Congratulates Iraqi's on Successful Elections." October 16, 2005, <http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/10/print/20051016-2.html> (accessed March 9, 2009).

¹³¹ George W. Bush, "Statement by the President of Death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi." June 8, 2006, <http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/06/print/20060608.html> (accessed March 9, 2009).

Where in 2002 and 2004, progress in the War on Terror was reflected in growing majorities in the House and Senate for the President's party, negative security trends in Iraq demonstrated thru growing sectarian violence were met by a dramatic swing in both chambers on November 7, 2006. Despite democratic progress in Iraq, years of Republican dominance were erased by sweeping 31-seat House and 6-seat Senate gains for the Democrats. These gains upended the balance in both chambers, and resulted in Democratic control of the American legislature. When coupled with the resignation of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld the very next day, they served as a no-confidence vote to the President and marked a growing sense of dissatisfaction with America's chosen course in Iraq to some, and an affirmation of American strategic failure to others. In a radio address that same day, and in an effort to prevent the swell of momentum against him, the President said to his opponents, "do not confuse the workings of American democracy with a lack of American will."¹³²

Amidst growing sectarian violence, and debate between the President and congressional democrats about the course of continued American action in Iraq, Saddam Hussein was hanged for his crimes against Iraqis. The President's remarks on 28 December 2006 were meant to mark a milestone in the development of Iraq. Saddam's fair trial, governed by the rule of law, closed a brutal chapter in Iraq's history in a fashion foreign to the nation for more than three decades. What should have been a celebratory moment for the President, marking near completion of his stated policy goals for Iraq, was undone by a roaring insurgency and seemingly unending violence.¹³³

¹³² George W. Bush, "President's Radio Address." November 11, 2006, <http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/11/print/20061111.html> (accessed March 9, 2009).

¹³³ George W. Bush, "President Bush's Statement on Execution of Saddam Hussein." December 29, 2006,

Although American military involvement in Iraq is ongoing and senior policy makers continue to address the developing democracy in Iraq, words and deeds spanning nearly three years since the 19 March 2003 U.S. led invasion have adequately captured the high and low points of the U.S. strategic communication effort. Collectively, between 1998 and 2006 official communications reflected Bush administration priorities for the elimination of WMD, termination of terrorism in Iraq, disruption of the WMD-terrorist nexus, preservation of the U.N.'s credibility and the establishment of freedom for the Iraqi people. Wartime military actions demonstrated their effects in enhancing or contradicting governmental verbal communications. Despite good intentions, when taken together, American words and deeds have set the stage for strategic failure in Iraq.

<http://www.georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/12/print/20061229.html> (accessed March 9, 2009).

“...Hussein's execution comes at the end of a difficult year for the Iraqi people and for our troops. Bringing Saddam Hussein to justice will not end the violence in Iraq, but it is an important milestone on Iraq's course to becoming a democracy that can govern, sustain, and defend itself, and be an ally in the War on Terror.”

“No protracted war can fail to endanger the freedom of a democratic country.”
Alexis de Tocqueville.

IV. Conclusions

Within a week of Hussein’s execution in Iraq, the President announced a new ‘surge’ strategy in Iraq, calling on U.S. Army Lieutenant General David Petraeus to implement it. Since expanding American military presence and changing tactics in the country, and despite a declining coalition contribution to combat forces, security and service have improved, violence has dropped by 90%, and combat deaths are now at a six-year low.¹ Given these conditions, victory appears at hand.

These accomplishments appear more remarkable when held against the backdrop of history. In six short years, Iraq “has been transformed from one of the most brutal tyrannies on earth to an example of democratic pluralism in the heart of the Arab world,” suggested Jacoby in the *Boston Globe*.² Further, of the President’s nine reasons justifying armed intervention in Iraq delivered in the one-year period immediately following the 2002 State of the Union, U.S. military intervention had corrected or nullified all of them. Iraq: no longer supported terror; fought alongside U.S. troops against al-Qaeda; had accepted development and proliferation restrictions on biological, chemical and nuclear weapons; terminated development of delivery vehicles for WMD; worked with the U.N.; and was the only functioning (fledgling) democracy in the region.

Despite this, poorly conducted strategic communication supporting Iraq operations from 2003 to 2006 led to national and global skepticism towards U.S.

¹ Jeff Jacoby, “Bush’s ‘Folly’ is Ending in Victory.” *Boston Globe*. March 25, 2009, http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/03/25/bushs_folly_is_ending_in_victory/ (accessed March 25, 2009).

² Ibid.

ambitions, diminished America's ability to act, and cut into her role as world leader, ultimately producing strategic defeat despite operational and tactical victories.

America's strategic failures regarding Iraq intervention were multifaceted, but rooted in two broad categories. First, from an Iraqi perspective, the coalition invasion marked a fight for national and cultural survival, while it represented only a peripheral interest for the U.S. Second, invasion was the test bed for the Bush Doctrine and while U.S. strategic communication efforts were focused and consistent, they did not properly emphasize the abandonment of containment for a more activist bent.

The disparity between Iraqi and U.S. interests over the outcome of a military showdown illustrate the concept of asymmetric motivation. Until Hussein was deposed, he was in a struggle for survival against a country that was merely fighting to prevent future terrorism against its interests and to promote democracy in support of an improved future. Hussein's survival in Iraq was based on a culture of fear and heavily reliant on the perception of WMD to promote that fear. Although the consequences of Iraqi supported WMD-terrorism against the U.S. were high, national survival was not threatened. Additionally, they were based on two great uncertainties: Iraqi possession of WMD, and Iraqi relationships with terrorists willing to act against America.

After Hussein was deposed, terrorists and Sunni's in Iraq were in a struggle for freedom of action and future survival, while the U.S. sought limited security objectives to promote democracy. Terrorists sought to capitalize on American presence to recruit a new generation of fighters committed to the death of the U.S., while the U.S. focused on killing men and their faulty ideology to add to the roles of democratic nations out of a belief that democracies don't go to war with one another. Sunni's in Iraq, stripped of

privilege conferred on the Ba'athist and realizing their diminished minority role wanted to stem their impending doom, and resorted to an insurgency which matched their vital interests against Americas peripheral desires for a stable democratic government and regional beacon of freedom. Hammes said it best relaying that,

“If a democracy gets involved where its vital interests are not at stake, its overall situation will be both difficult and dangerous. Players with vital interests will have large incentives to attack the democracy’s forces. They have an even larger incentive to ensure that the videos of those attacks make the news cycle. They know that in the past, such tactical attacks have been more likely to result in withdrawal than in retaliation...”³

Asymmetry in motivations for armed conflict in Iraq compounded America’s strategic change of course, and raised the need to broadly sell this change and earn multinational support for U.S. actions. Cold War containment was followed by ten years of strategic drift that ended 11 September 2001 with attacks against the U.S. homeland, and the advancement of preemption as the means to avert future national security crisis. This new strategy shared many traits with post-containment drift; there was no map for navigation and no compass for orientation. Where it differed from the past was that the ship was not adrift and the waters were no longer calm and predictable. The engine was providing full steam in a tumultuous sea.

Arguments against preemption were not new. Conclusively, Lincoln dismissed preemption as morally wrong writing:

“Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion...and you allow him to make war at pleasure. ...If today he should choose to say he thinks it necessary to invade Canada, to prevent the British from invading us, how could you stop him? You may say to him, ‘I

³ Thomas Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*. (St Paul, MN: MBI, 2004): 210.

see no probability of the British invading us'; but he will say to you, 'Be silent; I see it, if you don't.'"⁴

Despite a belief by Wolfowitz that Hussein-enabled WMD-terrorism was “the one issue everyone could agree on” as unacceptable,⁵ this reasoning was insufficient to justify a strategic course change and dispel skepticism about America’s true intentions in Iraq. Zinni perfectly captured this skepticism by saying:

“Whether the Bush doctrine is wisdom or folly, it’s undeniable that it has been applied inconsistently and haphazardly. Did Saddam Hussein really top the list of threats to the United States, or was North Korea or Iran more dangerous?”⁶

Given the uncertain moral foundation for preemptive armed intervention in Iraq, strategic communication took an increasingly important role in securing the ultimate success of U.S. actions. Based on Gough’s assertions, there was little room for misstep because, “no wizardry in communications can make bad policy decisions or actions palatable.”⁷

Although America’s overarching strategic failures were largely due to pre-conflict communication, crucial battlefield actions, and CPA policy also damaged U.S. credibility leaving America less able to act on the international scene. American leaders spoke in terms of best-case results, improperly inflating the expectations of both Iraqis and the domestic audience; American intervention was based on a WMD-Terrorism nexus that did not exist; and high profile military events and CPA policies destroyed credibility undercutting U.S. morality and values. Consequently the drug-out conflict has

⁴ Mario Cuomo and Harold Holzer, ed. *Lincoln on Democracy*. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004) 37.

⁵ Paul Wolfowitz, interview by Sam Tannenhaus, May 9, 2003, Vanity Fair, transcript <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2594> (accessed February 21, 2009).

⁶ Zinni, 146.

⁷ Susan L. Gough, “The Evolution of Strategic Influence.” (Research Paper, US Army War College, 2003).

overstrained the armed forces leaving them less capable for future missions, and caused a U.S. political sea change, stripping Republicans of their Presidential and legislative leadership. These weaknesses, and growing negative attitudes toward the U.S. have made future coalition counterterrorism campaigns both more difficult and less likely.

The broader War on Terror is acknowledged as a top priority, long-term engagement for the USG. It will demand patience with incremental successes earned thru the coordinated application of all elements of national power, and require support at the national and international level.⁸ In this struggle, unilateral action will prove insufficient to defend national interests, and may serve to delegitimize America's intentions and strengthen her non-traditional enemies. This necessitates that American policy does not increase anti-American sentiment. Foreign "hegemonic and arrogant"⁹ views of the U.S. caused by military intervention in Iraq must be overcome to achieve future success defending against terrorism.

The efforts of U.S. strategic communication must focus on making sure that our perceived threat is truly "common" and that our chosen course for facing the threat is in the collective best-interest. As General Zinni suggested,

"America is not an empire of conquest and self-interest, though some accuse us of that...yet America is an empire that cannot command or dictate, and does not want to; it can only influence. It is not an empire of conquest; it's an empire of influence."¹⁰

⁸ Clark A. Murdock, et al., *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era: Phase 2 Report*, (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004) 62. "...the demand for the United States and its international partners to conduct complex operations that require the integration of political, military, economic, humanitarian and other dimensions will likely continue."

⁹ Justine A. Rosenthal, "Southeast Asia; Archipelago of Afghanistans?" *Orbis* Summer (2003): 481.

¹⁰ Zinni, 4-5.

Failure to engage and sway foreign populations may be enough to prevent the state support for U.S. objectives. Ultimately the U.S. will not be judged on success or failure in Iraq proper, but because of her choice to intervene, when other options were available. Despite what may become a stable Persian Gulf, consistent with U.S. policy ambitions, America will be blamed as the source of the infection that caused the fever that she ultimately treated. This failure rests on poor strategy and poorer strategic communication that has weakened the U.S.'s ability to persuade other nations. In the end, "no power is absolute or guaranteed, for at its heart our politics is a contest of persuasion."¹¹

¹¹ Smith, 42.

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